# Southern AIR

Summer 2000

Volume 22, Issue 3

#### **BOARD MEETS TO PLAN**

On Friday, June 23, the SAIR Board along with "dinosaurs" Bill Fendley, Gerry McLaughlin, and Tim Sanford met to brainstorm strategic issues facing SAIR. The meeting accomplished a great deal, but those of us involved in planning for our institutions know well that "talk is cheap." Plans and brainstorming must evolve into actions to avoid "environmental drift": moving one way or another based on factors over which you exert no control.

A major concern was the Board's ability or inability to strategically move the organization forward. As Gerry McLaughlin put it: "The Board needs to be a group of strategic managers, not micro-managers." If SAIR is to continue to meet member needs, the Board must find effective and efficient ways to provide the required services and activities. In part, that means finding ways to engage more members in SAIR planning, programs, and services, and, of course, identifying member needs.

To examine these issues and get some solid recommendations for dealing with them, SAIR President Gerry Dizinno appointed Teresa Hall, a current Board Member-At-Large, to chair an ad hoc committee to review the SAIR By-Laws, especially with regard to the structure of the SAIR Board, duties of Board members, and standing committee structure and duties. Teresa will be selecting her committee members soon, and we will receive some preliminary feedback at the SAIR Board meetings in Myrtle Beach. The plan is to have recommendations to the membership for review following the SAIR Board meeting at AIR in Long Beach.

-Submitted by Gerry Dizinno



2000 SAIR Conference Myrtle Beach, South Carolina October 21-24, 2000 DETAILS INSIDE

#### YOUR VOTE COUNTS!

When the ballot for electing SAIR officers arrives in your mail, take time to make your choices and return it immediately to Glenn James, Chair of the Nominating Committee.

### Welcom e Our Newcom ers!

Giving a warm welcome to newcomers has long been a hallmark of SAIR. In Myrtle Beach, we encourage everyone to continue the tradition! Newcomers will have an identifying mark on their nametags. Keep your eyes open for them! When you meet someone new to SAIR, please (1) encourage the newcomer to attend any of the three special sessions we have designed especially for them; (2) invite them to attend a session with you; or (3) invite them to join you for conversation and coffee. The experiences will be rewarding for you AND for our newest members.

The three sessions provided to focus on newcomers and their needs are:

**Saturday evening dinner caravans** -- SAIR members and newcomers interested in gathering for dinner Saturday evening are encouraged to meet in the Ocean Dunes hotel lobby at 5:45. This annual event offers a wonderful opportunity to relax and meet new and seasoned SAIR members in a low-key, comfortable atmosphere.

**Newcomer's Workshop** -- Also a regular event is the Sunday afternoon workshop designed for those new to the field of institutional research. This year's workshop, *IR* 101, takes a brief look at IR's traditional role and expands upon its present role in serving the complex and varied higher education community. Presenters will discuss roles and activities of key IR functions, such as enrollment management, planning, budget and finance, and assessment, as well as provide information on web-based resources. While the workshop is free, pre-registration is requested.

**Newcomer's Welcome Reception** -- All SAIR members both new and seasoned are encouraged to join us at the annual Newcomer's Reception before Sunday's opening session, where we will greet and welcome our new members.

#### SAIR

#### The Southern Association for Institutional Research

http://www.sair.org

#### President

Gerry Dizinno St. Mary's University

#### Vice President/ President Elect

Harriott Calhoun Jefferson State Community College

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Please submit materials for the next issue of *Southern AIR* by mid-December 2000.

# President's Message . . .

#### From Gerry Dizinno



Greetings fellow SAIR members! This is my last Message before I hand over the duties to Harriott Calhoun – who, as you all know, is deep into the logistics for the upcoming conference in Myrtle Beach. She is doing a superb job, assisted by a number of dedicated and extremely competent conference committee members and chairs. Let me invite you to the conference website at http://www.coastal.edu/services/effect/SAIR/. There's a lot of information, so if you haven't yet decided whether you will attend the conference this year, give the site a look. I think after you've reviewed the material, I'll see you in Myrtle Beach.

Let me recap what has been happening in SAIR this year, in addition to the planning and work for the conference.

We had a significant issue arise regarding the location for the conference. The NAACP issued a boycott of South Carolina because the Confederate flag was being flown from the state capitol. After discussion among ourselves and consultation with others, the SAIR Board decided that while we supported the sentiment and purpose surrounding the boycott, for the best interests of the organization we would continue to hold the conference in Myrtle Beach. This was a really tough decision for me personally, but I think we ultimately made the right decision. I would love to talk with any of you about this, whether you are supportive or not supportive of the decision, in Myrtle Beach. My wish is that the SAIR Board will not have to face such a situation again.

In addition to our regular SAIR Board meeting at the AIR Forum, the Board joined me in Atlanta in early June for a special planning meeting (details in the article on page 1). We met for a day on the campus of Georgia Tech, with the goal of focusing the Board more on strategic issues, and I believe we achieved much.

SAIR Treasurer Rene Toups has, unfortunately, had to resign that office effective this October. Rene has a new position at the University of New Orleans, outside of IR, and his new duties will be as much as he can handle this year. We on the Board will greatly miss his input. Fortunately for SAIR, Hanne Delbridge, former Treasurer, has agreed to fill in for Rene; she has been appointed Treasurer beginning in October. The position of Treasurer will come up for election next year. This is one of the most demanding positions on the Board, and I hope that some of you will consider taking on these duties next year.

SAIR will be "officially" represented at the SACS/COC meeting this December. At last year's SACS meeting, Larry Jones and I spoke of the importance of linking SAIR with SACS, since the folks in SACS depend so much on the expertise of our members in site visits, for presentations at their meetings, and for planning and advice. We will have a short 6 PM Saturday meeting at SACS, and then we'll organize some of our famous dinner caravans. For those of you attending SACS, I hope to see you at the meeting. Check the SACS program carefully, though, just in case the meeting time has changed by then.

The SAIR conference for 2001 will be in Panama City, Florida, at the Edgewater Beach Resort, October 12 - 17. You'll hear more at the meeting in Myrtle Beach.

Last but not least, you should be receiving ballots for SAIR officers soon. It's very important that you complete your ballots quickly and return them to Glenn James, Past President. We are a bit delayed in the process compared to prior years, so your help in getting the votes in is greatly appreciated.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve you as SAIR President; I thoroughly enjoyed it. I do, however, look forward to passing on the duties to Harriott. She'll continue the tradition of excellent leadership for our organization. See you in Myrtle Beach!

Cheers, *Gerry* 

#### 2000 SAIR CONFERENCE



#### Southern Association for Institutional Research

Ocean Dunes/Sand Dunes Hotel and Conference Center October 21 - 24. 2000

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

The theme for the conference, **The** Challenges of Change: IR Beyond Y2K, sets the stage for an exciting professional development opportunity for institutional researchers and planners as we prepare for the twenty-first century. The program will offer pre-conference workshops; plenary sessions; paper, panel, roundtable and demonstration sessions; and ample time for interaction with colleagues. The Ocean Dunes/Sand Dunes Resort and Conference Center is a wonderful location for SAIR 2000. The Myrtle Beach area of South Carolina is a year-round vacation paradise along the sun-kissed shores of the Atlantic coastline, but the wide, sandy beaches and salty sea breezes are just the beginning. The area is home to an array of attractions for every age and every taste, including championship golf courses, spectacular liveentertainment theaters, thrilling amusement parks, superb shopping, delectable cuisine, and historical sights. As befitting a resort location, dress for the SAIR 2000 Conference will be casual.

A selection of workshops will be offered on Saturday and Sunday, which require special registration. Please reserve your place in the workshop you want to attend by completing the appropriate registration at the time you pre-register for the conference. The opening plenary-session speaker on Sunday evening is Dr. John Pelizza, a nationally known authority on wellness, change process, stress management, productivity, team building and personal growth. His great strength is his ability to entertain a group and deliver the important concepts at the same time. The reception following the opening session is an opportunity to greet friends and meet new people in a casual atmosphere.

Monday brings a full day of conference sessions, including Special Interest Group meetings, a plenary session, concurrent sessions, roundtable discussions, and the association's annual business meeting. Continental breakfast, luncheon and afternoon break are included in your registration fee. The Monday plenary-session speaker is **Dr. Trudy** Bers, Senior Director of Research, Curriculum and Planning at Oakton Community College, who is also an Association for Institutional Research (AIR) Past-President. Trudy is an experienced researcher, published author, and excellent speaker who is always informative and thought provoking.

The conference banquet on Monday evening will be a dinner at the hotel with a beach party theme, including buffet service and seating at round tables with beach-ball striped cloths. The meal includes salads, choice of two entrees (stuffed flounder or baked chicken), green beans, wild rice, dessert, and tea or coffee. You will have an excellent dinner, entertainment, dancing, and ample room for socializing with your SAIR colleagues, with no hassle about transportation, separate checks or tipping. Networking is one of the main reasons that people give for attending conferences and SAIR is known for its friendly atmosphere, so you will want to take advantage of this opportunity to eat, meet, and have fun. Don't forget to register for the Monday evening event when you pre-register for the conference.

On Tuesday morning we will have our traditional Awards Breakfast, starting the day with a sit-down breakfast, good fellowship, and recognition of individuals who have made special contributions to our association. The remainder of the morning will be occupied with paper, panel, and demonstration sessions, so plan your departure for AFTER 12:00 noon.

Complete the registration form you received in the mail and return it at your earliest opportunity. SAIR 2000 offers a wonderful opportunity for professional development and collegial interaction with our counterparts across the southern region, so see you in Myrtle!

> Harriott Calhoun Program Chair

#### **CONFERENCE WWW SITE**

http://www.costal.edu/services/effect/SAIR

If you need additional information, contact:

Harriott D. Calhoun, Program Chair Jefferson State Community College 2601 Carson Road Birmingham, Alabama 35215 (205) 856-7903 hcalhoun@jscc.cc.al.us

Conference Information Page



#### HOTEL INFORMATION AND TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS

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#### Saturday, October 21

7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

8:30 a.m. – noon

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m.

Registration

Workshops

Southern Univ. Group (SUG)

Hotel Lobby for Dinner Caravan

CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

#### Ocean Dunes/Sand Dunes Resort & Conference Center 201 75th Avenue North, Myrtle Beach, SC 29572

This beach resort is oceanfront with 700 feet of sandy beach, full service health club, indoor and outdoor pools, gift shop, convenience store, bicycle rentals, complimentary tennis privileges at a nearby private club, and play privileges at nearly 100 premier area golf courses. The conference room rates are fantastic for such a wonderful facility. To make reservations, **call 1-800-599-9872**, **extension 25**. Be sure to say that you are attending **SAIR** to receive the following rates (plus 9.5% tax):

Oceanview Room	\$70.00
Oceanfront Room	\$78.00
Oceanfront Efficiency	\$84.00
Tower I One-Bedroom Exec. Suite	\$90.00
Conference rates apply only through Se	eptember 6 (on a
room-available basis).	•

#### **DRIVING DIRECTIONS**

U.S. Highways 17 and 501 and S.C. Highway 9 provide direct access to the Myrtle Beach resort area from Interstate Highways 95 and 20. From US-17N, turn RIGHT onto 67th Avenue North; turn LEFT onto North Kings Highway; turn RIGHT onto 74th Avenue North. Maps and detailed driving directions are available on the conference web site.

#### OFFICIAL CONFERENCE AIRLINE

US Airways is the official carrier for the conference, offering a 10% discount (5% discount off the lowest published US Airways fare, plus an additional 5% on 60 day advance purchase). To obtain the discount, you or your professional travel consultant may call US Airways' Group and Meeting Reservation Office *toll free* at (877) 874-7687 and refer to Gold File Number 61631584 (SAIR). Other airlines serving Myrtle Beach International Airport are Atlantic Southeast, Continental Connector, COMAIR, Midway Connection, TWA, Air Tran, Spirit, and Vanguard.

#### TRANSPORTATION FROM AIRPORT

A complimentary round-trip airport shuttle may be scheduled when you make your hotel reservation, or you may call at a later date to the toll free hotel number (1-800-599-9872, extension 25) and give them the time of your flight. There is also a courtesy phone for the shuttle in the baggage claim area of the airport. National automobile rental agencies are available at the airport terminal; and the resort has an on-site U-Save.

#### DISPLAY AND CONTESTS

A display area will be available at the conference to show fact books, planning documents, and other institutional research products. Bring along examples of your office work and share with others. Also, check the conference web site for details about entering the Best Web Fact Book competition. Awards for best fact book, mini publication, planning document, and web fact book will be presented at the Awards Breakfast on Tuesday morning.

#### Sunday, October 22

7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration
8:00 a.m. – noon	Workshops
8:00 a.m. – noon	SUG Meeting
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Workshops
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Traditionally Black Colleges and
	Universities (TBCU) Meeting;
	Assessment Special Interest
	Group
4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Presenters and Facilitators
	Meeting
5:00 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.	Newcomers Reception
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Conference Opening Plenary
	Session
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Conference Reception

#### Monday, October 23

7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration
7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.	Dinosaurs' Breakfast (SAIR
	Past-Presidents)
7:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.	Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Conference Plenary Session
9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Panels & Demonstrations
11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Papers
Noon – 1:00 p.m.	Luncheon and Roundtable
	Discussions
1:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Papers
2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Papers
3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Refreshment Break
3:15 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.	SAIR Annual Business Meeting
4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
7:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.	Special Event

#### Tuesday, October 24

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. 9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Awards Breakfast Papers/Panels/Demonstrations
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Papers/Panels/Demonstrations SAIR Board Meeting



#### **Golf Scramble**

To join fellow hackers on Saturday & Sunday (Oct. 21-22), please contact Dave Fleming at sched@clemson.edu or phone him at (8654) 656-4416. All levels of players are welcome!

# IR Beyond Y2K

#### **WORKSHOPS**

# Enrollment is limited; please register soon!

The choices of pre-conference workshops provide participants with an opportunity to explore in-depth experiences in a variety of topics. Check the appropriate number(s) on the registration form to reserve your place. Fees are \$25 per person per workshop, except for Workshops 1 and 5 that are \$50 each and Workshop 9 for which there is no charge.

□ WK1: People, Processes, and Managing Data Saturday, October 21, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

> Richard D. Howard, Montana State U.- Bozeman Gerald W. McLaughlin, DePaul University

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: None. Description: How can we make better decisions? Our ability to meet challenges of change in the next millennium depends on our ability to support decision-makers. This support requires quality data that are translated into usable information that increases institutional intelligence. This workshop focuses on improving the value of your information. Five functions of quality information support will be presented along with three roles that are key to quality information. Using a checklist, participants will assess the quality of information support at their particular institutions. In group exercises, participants will identify the major barriers that limit better information and consider ways to overcome these limiting factors. Each participant will receive a copy of the presenters' AIR monograph People, Processes, and Managing Data.

WK 2: Beginning SPSS 10.0 for the Institutional Researcher – Saturday, October 21, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (NOTE: This workshop will be held off-site; shuttles will leave hotel at 8:00 a.m.)

Michael G. Crow, Savannah State University Paul Illich, McLennan Community College

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: Ability to navigate in Windows 95/97/98 and basic word processing and spreadsheet computer skills important. Understanding of basic descriptive statistics terminology, including measures of central tendency and variation, is valuable. Description: This hands-on session will highlight the capabilities of the industry-standard statistical research tool, SPSS 10, and will focus on practical tactics and procedures for utilizing typical institutional data with SPSS, labeling variables and values, modifying and selecting data for computations, managing window sessions, and calculating basic descriptive statistics including frequency distributions with bar charts or histograms and summary statistics (mean, mode, variation, and standard deviation). Participants will also become familiar with the invaluable "OLAP cube" and with preparing and printing basic reports with data and images to communicate findings from typical institutional research projects.

□ WK3: SPSS Intermediate Statistics & Syntax Application – Saturday, Oct. 21, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (NOTE: This workshop will be held off-site; shuttles will leave hotel at 8:00 a.m.)

Analinda Moreno, Texas A & M University

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: Direct experience with SPSS necessary. Ability to navigate in Windows 95/97/98 and basic word processing and spreadsheet computer skills important. Understanding of intermediate statistics terminology, including plotting data, hypotheses testing and means comparison, is valuable.

Description: This hands-on session will introduce the registrant to SPSS syntax and how it can be directed to manipulate SPSS data files such that it enables the user to focus on performing intermediate types of statistical analysis and data management tasks. Specifically this session will expose the registrant to an introduction to SPSS syntax commands related to comparing and differentiating groups. This knowledge will then be applied as an aid in the application of practical techniques and tips for when, why and how to utilize different modus operandi for hypothesis testing and means comparison. This session WILL NOT attempt to address advanced statistics. Rather it will substitute a focus on developing syntax using pull-down menus and the benefits of utilizing syntax to manipulate data.

WK4: SPSS Tables -- Saturday, October 21, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (NOTE: This workshop will be held off-site; shuttles will leave hotel at 12:30 p.m.)

Paul Illich , McLennan Community College Michael G. Crow, Savannah State University Analinda Moreno, Texas A & M University

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: Some direct experience with SPSS valuable. However, participation in WK2: Beginning SPSS 10.0 will provide sufficient background for this session. Ability to navigate in Windows 95/97/98 and basic word processing and spreadsheet computer skills important. Understanding of descriptive statistics valuable. Description: This hands-on session will focus on the practical applications of SPSS Tables. The session will provide a step-by-step discussion of how SPSS Tables can be used to automate the production of comprehensive reports such as grade distribution reports that contain nested levels (e.g., division, department, instructor). The session will emphasize the advantages of publishing reports directly from SPSS output files. Participants will learn how to 1) structure SPSS data files to fit the requirements of SPSS Tables, 2) use SPSS Tables to create both simple and complex tables that contain multiple levels or layers, 3) customize table formats, and 4) print tables or export tables directly to the Internet. Participants will create tables directly through SPSS syntax commands and through the SPSS windows environment. The workshop will also include a discussion of how to interpret data produced through SPSS Tables.

WK5: Using Active Server Page (ASP) to Interact with Your Campus via the World Wide Web – Saturday, October 21, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. (NOTE: This workshop will be held off-site; shuttles will leave hotel at 12:30 p.m.)

Sarah D. Carrigan, U. North Carolina - Greensboro

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: Competency in HTML. Description: This workshop will focus on introducing the fundamentals of Active Server Page (ASP) technology to the IR professionals who are already competent HTML users. Some of the most practical applications of an interactive web site in an IR office include survey data collection, and data editing for report development that requires multi-person input, such as faculty teaching and workload reports. The participant will learn the basic requirements for ASP use in a hands-on environment, see several IR specific examples developed by the workshop presenter, and receive resource materials on a diskette including generic ASP files ready for modification and a list of suggested Web sites and texts.

#### WORKSHOPS continued

# □ WK6: SPSS for Windows: Data Management and Troubleshooting – Sunday, October 22, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Jan Upton, Institutional Research Corp.

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: Novice to intermediate SPSS users. Description: Using SPSS as a data management tool can enhance the effectiveness of IR offices. However, many researchers do not fully appreciate SPSS's versatility and ease of use. The first half of this workshop covers basic data management tasks such as opening non-SPSS files, sorting data, creating and recoding variables, pasting and saving code, splitting files, and merging data with an emphasis on examples relevant for IPEDS and other surveys. The second half covers how to troubleshoot problems and includes discussion of reformatting mixed data, utilizing spreadsheet and word processing programs in conjunction with SPSS, and resetting SPSS options. This is a demonstration workshop, not held in a computer lab.

# WK7: Assessment Tools and Techniques: The State of the Art in Institutional Research – Sunday, October 22, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Randy L. Swing, Brevard College Libby V. Morris, University of Georgia

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: None. Description: Evaluating and selecting assessment instruments can be a time consuming and confusing task. This session uses a typology of instruments to provide a structured overview of available assessment surveys and cognitive tests. The presenter will provide a printed technical review and examples of each instrument reviewed. Because of the key role of the first years of college in retention and academic success, this session will particularly highlight those instruments most appropriate for use with freshman and sophomores, which benchmark entry-level position, provide formative evaluation, or measure change during the first college years. Materials presented in this session are the result of a 14-month grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts, which established the Policy Center on the First Year of College. Each participant will receive a notebook of materials and guided review of additional resources on the Policy Center's Web site.

#### □ WK8: Surveys of Students and Faculty: Using Good Practices and the Internet to Lower Costs and Increase Response Rates – Sunday, October 22, 8:30 -11:30 a.m.

Stephen R. Porter, University of Maryland, Baltimore Paul D. Umbach, University of Maryland, College Park

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: None. Description: This workshop will discuss combining good survey practices with easy to learn Internet technologies to enable institutional researchers to conduct quick and low-cost Internet surveys with high response rates. Aimed toward individuals with beginning or intermediate survey skills, the workshop will cover topics such as the pros and cons of paper and electronic surveys, the skills and software needed for electronic surveys, and how to combine good surveying practices with administration over the web. Workshop participants will receive paper and electronic examples of good surveys, including surveys based on Perl script and Microsoft Front Page.

### □ WK9: IR 101 (For those new to institutional research.) -- Sunday, October 22, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Marsha Harrington, Virginia Tech Lorne Kuffle, College of William and Mary Theresa Y. Smith, University of Oklahoma Robert Kuhn, Louisiana State University Alice M. Simpkins, Paine College Debbie Dailey, Georgetown University

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: None. Description: This information-packed workshop presents a brief look at IR's traditional role and then expands upon its current roles in serving the complex and varied decision making needs of today's higher education community. Presenters will discuss some of the key IR functions including planning, budget and finance, enrollment projections, assessment and institutional effectiveness, and resources available via the internet.

## **□** WK10: Focus Group Research Sunday, October 22, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Trudy H. Bers, Oakton Community College

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: None. Description: This workshop will provide institutional researchers who have no previous experience in conducting focus groups an overview of the methodology, including: (1) introduction to focus groups and examination of appropriate uses of this methodology, (2) selection and recruitment of participants, (3) questions and interview guides, (4) role and responsibilities of moderator, (5) observers, (6) logistics and costs, (7) analyzing data and information, (8) writing focus group reports, and (9) preparing a draft proposal for a focus group project. Examples and discussions will be germane to the context of higher education. Activities involving participants will be incorporated within the workshop format.

# WK11: Preparing Your Institution for a SACS Self Study -- Sunday, October 22, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Lindy Smith, Coastal Carolina University Ross Griffith, Wake Forest University Anne Marie Bellamy, Brunswick College

Prerequisite Skills/Knowledge: None. Description: This workshop will provide both the novice and experienced researchers an understanding of what to expect from a SACS visiting team and how to prepare for the visit. Presenters from a private research institution, a public comprehensive university, and a community college will discuss appropriate language and content for the self-study document, access to onsite documentation during the visit, and living/working arrangements for the visiting team itself. During the workshop, participants will be given a workbook and will be involved in a discussion on the issues, as well as in the preparation of a model setup for the visiting committee.

# SEE YOU IN MYRTLE BEACH!

Page 6 Conference Informa-

#### SAIR.REVIEW@IHE

*The Practitioner-Researcher: Developing Theory from Practice.* Peter Jarvis. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1999. Reviewed by Larry G. Jones, Institute of Higher Education.

Although it isn't clear that Jarvis specifically had institutional researchers in mind when he developed his thinking on the role of the practitioner-researcher in contemporary organizations and society, it does not take much extrapolation to fit his message to those doing (or teaching) institutional research in American colleges and universities. Peter Jarvis is professor of continuing education in the School of Educational Studies at the University of Surrey, England, and an adjunct professor of adult education at The University of Georgia. His research on adult and continuing education, and particularly on the training of adults working in various professional settings, led him to explore the relationship between practice and theory in the workplace and between theory and practice in the academy. The outcome is an insightful reflection on the theory-research-practice-research-theory model shaping the modern marketplace and a "society which has become more reflexive and practitioners who have become more reflective. . . . " (p. xii)

The purpose of the book is twofold: "to highlight and examine the role of the practitioner-researcher and to try to understand more clearly the relationship between practice, practical knowledge, and theory."(p. xiii) To accomplish the purpose, Jarvis considers in detail five topics: Understanding Connections Between Research and Practice; The Nature of Practice; Research in Practice; Practice and Theory; and concludes with Reflections on the Practitioner-Researcher.

Jarvis identifies developments that have shifted research from the almost exclusive domain of academics and scientists into the hands of those who are expected to apply the theory to practice. In fact, he suggests that "the idea that theory should be applied to practice is increasingly being recognized as an oversimplification, at the least, and at the most, as false." (p.3) In part, Jarvis concludes, this is because practitioners are doing their own research, even though it may not be recognized as such by the researchers; new knowledge is being based on practical results rather than empirical tests or logical derivations; the disconnects between theory and realities are so glaring; decision makers are looking for more answers; and, because the answers are requiring more immediate and practical research. In no small part, professional education and training are also contributing to the shift of research from the laboratory to the workplace. Undergraduate degree programs often require practicums, internships, co-op programs, even some research experience, and graduate programs, even those in "applied" areas or "professional" degrees, are often requiring a research component. While the intent of these programs is seldom to produce researchers, the practitioners they produce are neither shy about nor incapable of doing research. Professional associations, like SAIR, AIR and the rest, devote most of their organizational effort at in-service training to improve practice (often knowledge based) and, equally significant, considerable effort at research to improve practice. The practitioner-researcher is clearly not a passing phenomenon and, since the practitioner-researcher is both researcher and practitioner at the same time, the practitioner-researcher model may well represent the perfect professional hybrid for contemporary society. According to Jarvis, the practitioner's knowledge comes either from the profession's formally constructed body of knowledge, or from the curriculum developed by schools or colleges to train new entrants to the profession. In both cases, the practical knowledge on which the theory is developed is historical even though the practice which it is designed to support is current and future. Considering that institutional research has no "curriculum" and not much of a formally documented or researched knowledge base, one could wonder how it is that institutional research manages as well as it does to develop new professionals, serve the IR practitioners, and still provide benefit to institutions and higher education. It might be safe to assume that IR networking (including forums, conferences, institutes and workshops) has provided the practical knowledge required of the practitioner. Still, the material on the nature of practical knowledge (process knowledge, tacit knowledge, content knowledge, beliefs and values in chapter 4) and on becoming a practitioner ("Practicing," chapter 5 and "Reflective Practice," chapter 6) could and should be carefully considered by all seeking and providing IR professional development opportunities. It might also seem obvious to even the most casual observer that IR has achieved some recognition and success in the academy due to the fact that IR practitioners are researchers: a significant rubric in the practitioner-researcher construct.

In a very real sense, much of the institutional research done by IR practitioners is a study of "practice." While journal articles, forum and conference presentations report research findings, they are often presented for and attended by those who are more interested in "how" to do the research than in learning what was discovered. "How we did this" sessions frequently draw the largest audiences at IR meetings. Not only do we study what we do, we often study what our colleagues do (outcomes assessment, effectiveness, management audits), and ultimately we study what the institution does (policy studies, self study). Without much stretch, all of those studies are research on "practice," and while it isn't a study of our practice, it is a form of practitioner-research. Jarvis's work provides a substantive approach to understanding the particulars and peculiarities of researching practice.

The historical context for "practice" is based on theory derived from research, but the underlying context for Jarvis's practitioner-researcher is the realization that theory can and should be derived from practice. There is much in this book that can be used to create, evaluate and emulate in the development of institutional research theory from institutional research practice.

Editor's Note: This is the second in a new Southern AIR series featuring reviews of books, journals and articles of interest to institutional researchers prepared exclusively for SAIR by faculty and students at the Institute of Higher Education, The University of Georgia, as part of the SAIR/IHE Institutional Research Alliance.

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