



Newsletter

Texas Association for Institutional Research

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message	1
Executive Committee	3
2012 Program Committee	3
Appointed Committees	3
Vice President's Message	4
TAIR-L Listserv	5
TAIR Summer Workshop Update	5
TAIR Travel Grants	5
Corpus Christi History	6
Special Event	7
Pre-Conference Workshops	8
Membership Information	11

A Letter From Your President Darline Morris



Even in lean financial times, the Texas Association for Institutional Research (TAIR) continues to grow in membership and scope of work and have a positive impact on higher education in the State of Texas. Despite the budget crunch, the Austin conference was very successful and TAIR membership reached 228 representing every sector of higher education throughout the state, including both public and private institutions, community colleges, universities, and technical colleges.

The 2012 annual conference will soon be here. We look forward to another strong turnout in Corpus Christi, thanks to the tireless efforts of Vice President Carol Tucker and her Program Committee. This year's theme, "The Winds of Change: The Importance of Institutional Research in Turbulent Times," will draw on the experience of a robust cross-section of our membership who will present topics on strategic information management, assessment, student success, IR office management, data warehousing, student engagement, and a variety of technical and analytical tricks and tools. In an era where data-driven decision-making is so vital to the health and sustainability of our institutions, there are sure to be many topics of interest and value to each of us. Registration began in November. Early Registration goes through December 25, 2011.

We appreciate the dedication of so many of you to the mission of TAIR and to sustaining the organization at a time when budget constraints necessarily limit travel funds. To try and relieve some of the financial burdens of travel for more individuals, we are continuing to offer TAIR travel grant awards this year. Carol and the local arrangements team have done a great job of keeping the conference costs down, for which I am very grateful.

Continued on page 2

Please note that we are proposing changes to by-laws, to be voted on during the business meeting at the conference. Those changes will establish the TAIR Data Advisory Committee (DAC) as a TAIR standing committee. The purpose of the TAIR Data Advisory Committee is to identify important issues related to the collection and use of higher education data and to inform the Executive Committee and the members of TAIR about issues related to the collection and use of higher education data. TAIR DAC will work with other agencies and associations on higher education data-related projects. We appreciate your support at the business meeting as we vote on this matter and work to improve our processes going forward.

In closing, I want to encourage you and your colleagues to register for the conference now if you have not already done so. We cannot over-emphasize that the vital role played by higher education institutional researchers and information managers has never been so critical as it is right now. We all share similar strategic, budgetary, and accountability hurdles. The TAIR conference provides a well-focused, low-cost, and timely forum for the exchange of ideas, issues, concerns, tools, and strategies to help us each survive these trying times. Come add your voice to the synergy and solutions that come together through TAIR. We look forward to seeing you in Corpus Christi in February 2012!

Cordially yours,

Darline Morris, President
Texas Association for Institutional Research



Photo Courtesy of Bridgette Hardin

TAIR 2012 Program Committee

VP and Program Chair	Carol Tucker, University of Houston – Downtown
Concurrent Sessions	Rebecca Richter, Temple College
Evaluations	Mary Barton, University of North Texas
General Sessions	Tom Corll, Midland College
Local Arrangements	Bridgette Hardin, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
Brochure & Tri-fold	Tracy Stegmair, Richland College
Registration/Secretary	Kate Amorella Proff, Texas State University – San Marcos
Vendor Contact	Marcelo Paredes, University of Texas – Pan American
Roundtables	Rita Caso, Sam Houston State University
SIGs	Trish Norman, The University of Texas System
Session Coordinators	Faron Kincheloe, Baylor University
Workshops/Prof Develop	Susan Thompson, Texas State University – San Marcos
Technology	Dave Downing, University of North Texas

Appointed Committees

Data Advisory Committee

- Martha Oburn, Houston CC System – Chair
- Public 4-Year: Vicki West, Texas Tech University
Roy Matthew, University of Texas – El Paso
Kate Amorella Proff, Texas State University – San Marcos
Carol Tucker, University of Houston – Downtown
- Public 2-Year: Kathy Friedrich, College of the Mainland
Tom Corll, Midland College
- Private 4-Year: Sue Herring, Baylor University
Phil Rhodes, Houston Baptist University
- Technical: Ben Cox, Texas State Technical College – Waco

Professional Development Committee

- Susan Thompson, Texas State University – San Marcos – Chair
Janet Beinke, THECB
Tom Corll, Midland College
Salma Ferdous, University of Texas – San Antonio
Danica Frampton, St. Edward's University
Joe Meyer, Texas State University – San Marcos

Awards Committee

- Darline Morris, Postsecondary Consultant – Chair
Members to be selected

Nominating Committee

- Darline Morris, Postsecondary Consultant – Chair
Danica Frampton, St. Edward's University
Jaime Garcia, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
Bao Huynh, Richland College
Jana Marak, Baylor University

Financial Review Committee

- Jim O'Donnell, Mountain View College – Chair

Executive Committee

President

Darline Morris
Postsecondary Consultant
Whitney, Texas
(254) 694-2267
dbaldwin@hillsboro.net

Vice President

Carol Tucker
University of Houston – Downtown
Houston, Texas
(713) 221-8269
TuckerCa@uhd.edu

Secretary

Kate Amorella Proff
Texas State University – San Marcos
San Marcos, Texas
(512) 245-2356
kamorella@txstate.edu

Treasurer

Linda Perez
San Jacinto College
Pasadena, Texas
(281) 998-6191
linda.perez@sjcd.edu

Members-at-Large

Professional Development

Susan Thompson
Texas State University – San Marcos
San Marcos, Texas
(512) 245-2348
st03@txstate.edu

Technology

Dave Downing
University of North Texas
Denton, Texas
(940) 369-5290
dave.downing@unt.edu

Newsletter Editor

Catherine Brown
University of St. Thomas
Houston, Texas
(713) 525-3507
chbrown@stthom.edu



A Letter From Your Vice President **Carol Tucker**

I hope that your fall semester is going well. During the summer and fall, the TAIR Program Committee has been hard at work getting ready for TAIR 2012 and we hope that you will be able to join us in Corpus Christi. Registration is now open for the conference. Register by December 25 to take advantage of early bird registration!

The theme for this year's TAIR conference is "The Winds of Change: The Importance of Institutional Research in Turbulent Times." Appropriate to this year's conference theme, the conference is being held at the Omni Hotel looking out at the beautiful Gulf of Mexico. Because all of our institutions are under tough budget constraints, the Executive Committee made the decision to start the conference with a luncheon session at noon on Wednesday, February 22 rather than the earlier start time that it has had in recent years. This schedule change should, we hope, allow more people to travel that morning and save on hotel costs.

Thanks to outstanding participation by you and other TAIR members, as well as the dedicated efforts of our TAIR Program Committee and TAIR Professional Development Committee, there will again be over 30 quality concurrent sessions this year, as well as a variety of roundtables, special interest groups, and pre-conference workshops. You will have plenty of sessions to choose from on a wide range of topics that are important to institutional research offices around the state, from accreditation to data warehousing to survey research - and everything in between.

We also have two dynamic General Session speakers lined up to motivate, educate, and inspire us. Dr. Belle Wheelan, President of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools will be our opening speaker. Dr. Wheelan will provide an update on SACS issues and federal accreditation requirements. Our second luncheon speaker is Dr. Trudy Banta, recognized internationally for her books and speaking on the role of institutional research in supporting institutional effectiveness.

In addition to all of the informative sessions scheduled to take place at the conference, we are quite excited about the special event that our Local Arrangements Chair, Bridgette Hardin, has lined up for us! We will be able to dine on board the USS Lexington, a retired aircraft carrier, and after dinner we can tour the ship! Those seeking adventure can also use the flight simulators on board. It should be a very memorable experience and a good opportunity for less formal networking with your IR colleagues.

The TAIR Annual Conference provides an informal, welcoming, and engaging environment to network with colleagues and share knowledge. It is one of the best, lowest-cost, and most rewarding professional development opportunities for IR professionals in the state. I hope all of you will consider making the trip and I look forward to seeing you in Corpus Christi in February!

Carol Tucker, TAIR 2012 Conference Chair

TAIR-L Listserv

All current members can post information directly to the listserv. Send your email directly to tair-l@texas-air.org.

Unsubscribe/Subscribe can be done at http://texas-air.org/mailman/listinfo/tair-l_texas-air.org or requests can be sent to Dave Downing at dave.downing@unt.edu

TAIR Summer Workshop Update

TAIR held its annual Summer Workshop at Texas State University's beautiful Round Rock campus on Friday, August 5. In the morning, all participants attended an excellent session on "Applied Statistics for IR Professionals" with Dr. Paul Illich from McLennan Community College. The afternoon session gave participants an opportunity to choose one of two sessions: "Using SAS in Institutional Research", led by Dr. Phil Rhodes from Houston Baptist University, or "SPSS for Institutional Research and Reporting," led by Mr. Joseph Meyer from Texas State University.

Thirty-three individuals attended the summer workshop and, according to the post-workshop evaluation, they had a great experience. Thanks go to the three presenters for the time and effort they put into providing a quality professional development experience for our membership, and thanks also go to the staff at the Round Rock Higher Education Center for rolling out the welcome mat to ensure a great experience for everyone. If you were not able to attend, we missed you... and do not forget that TAIR will offer more great professional development opportunities in the form of pre-conference workshops during the 2012 conference in Corpus Christi!



Photo Courtesy of Jeff Janko

TAIR Travel Grants

TAIR wants to be sure that funding is not the reason that you or your staff will miss TAIR 2012 and will be awarding travel grants at \$300 each to help cover expenses. Travel grants are available to both active members and those becoming new members in 2012.

http://www.texas-air.org/assets/pdf/Travel_Grants_Application.pdf

Special Event - USS LEXINGTON

Don't miss your chance to visit the legendary Blue Ghost and take in a bit of patriotic history!



Photo Courtesy of the USS LEX

Commissioned in 1943, LEXINGTON served longer and set more records than any carrier in U.S. Naval history. Decommissioned in 1991, the 910-foot, 16-deck, 33,000-ton aircraft carrier now serves as an important historical repository and museum. Because of the historical significance of the USS LEXINGTON, the ship is maintained as a tribute to the men and women of the United States Armed Forces and as a memorial to the people who died serving the US, in the defense of freedom, especially in World War II. Displays, ceremonies, and other programs emphasize the heroism and sacrifice of those who have served the nation in the Navy and the Marine Corps.

The TAIR 2012 Conference Special Event will take place aboard the USS LEXINGTON on Thursday, February 23rd. Highlights of the Special Event include:

- ▶ A scrumptious South Texas meal served on the ship's 654 foot long hangar deck
- ▶ Several guided tours designed to explore the aircraft carrier's eleven decks (more than 100,000 square feet)
- ▶ For you thrill seekers, be sure to take advantage of the ship's [Flight Simulator](#).
- ▶ For you movie buffs, be sure to take in a bit of visual excitement at the LEX's three story tall [MEGA Theater](#).
- ▶ For you Ghost Hunters- you may just encounter a ghost in the engine room or sick bay- many interesting sights and sounds have been reported on this historic vessel! Even the folks from TAPS Ghost Hunters (Syfy Channel) have encountered interesting phenomena here.

Welcome to Corpus Christi - The sparkling city by the bay!



Photo Courtesy of the Corpus Christi CVB

Corpus Christi, the eighth largest city in the state (2010 Census), is known for being a coastal city with the sixth largest port in the nation. In terms of pop culture, Corpus Christi has served as the backdrop for many films, including *The Legend of Billie Jean* (1985), *Selena* (1997), and *Pearl Harbor* (2001). Corpus Christi has also been the home city for many celebrities including Farrah Fawcett, Dabney Coleman, Lou Diamond Phillips, Selena, and Eva Longoria- just to name a few.

In addition to its soft-sand beach of Padre Island, Corpus Christi has great area attractions, including: The Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History, Municipal Marina, Heritage Park & Multi-Cultural, USS Lexington, The Asian Cultures Museum and Educational Center, Texas State Aquarium, Texas Surf Museum, Art Museum of South Texas, Harbor Playhouse, Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, the South Texas Botanical Gardens and Nature Center, and Corpus Christi Skate Park.

Corpus Christi is home to the Corpus Christi IceRays (Central Hockey League), Corpus Christi Hooks (Baseball Texas League), and the Corpus Christi Hammerheads (Indoor Football League). Additionally, Corpus Christi serves as one of the host cities for the National Wind Surfing competitions, and the National Speed Boat Racing Championship.

Corpus Christi is also home to several institutions of higher learning: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Del Mar College, Our Lady of Corpus Christi, and numerous vocational institutions.

TAIR 2012 Pre-Conference Workshops

Arrive early to the TAIR conference and attend one of the great pre-conference workshops that are available to you at a very low cost! You can choose from among the seven workshops listed below. Please note that the first workshop, IPEDS Data and Benchmarking, will require separate registration through a special AIR website that will open on December 7. If you choose to attend the IPEDS workshop (which is free), you are also eligible to apply for travel grant funds from AIR to help with your expenses. More information about the IPEDS workshop and AIR travel grants will be e-mailed to you in early December; if you want to attend any of the other six great pre-conference workshops, sign up for them when you register for the TAIR conference.

W1 Title: IPEDS Data and Benchmarking: Supporting Decision Making and Institutional Effectiveness

Day: Tuesday, February 21

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Laguna Madre

Description: This workshop will consist of two modules.

Module 1 is designed for participants with little to no experience in the area of conducting benchmarking studies or with the IPEDS Data Center. This module introduces the fundamentals of creating benchmarks to measure institutional effectiveness. The module provides an overview of the types of comparison groups that can be constructed using IPEDS data, with examples of appropriate use. Participants will use actual data from the IPEDS Surveys, including the IPEDS Data Feedback Report and Executive Peer Tool. Exercises and resources will demonstrate processes to establish key performance indicators and identify variables to refine comparison groups.

Module 2 is designed for participants familiar with the concepts of benchmarking and building comparison groups, the IPEDS surveys, and the IPEDS Data Center. This module focuses on practical applications for using IPEDS data in an institutional effectiveness (accreditation) self-study. Participants will use IPEDS survey data to create a benchmarking study, discuss specific research questions, and identify the types of comparison groups and key performance indicators that could address each. Exercises will focus on using the IPEDS Data Center to extract and analyze data.

Presenter: TBD

W2 Title: Integrating Qualitative Methods into Institutional Research

Day: Tuesday, February 21

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: Matagorda

Description: This workshop will highlight the importance of using qualitative research as part of a post-secondary research agenda and how it can be integrated and used by an institution's research department. Qualitative research can expand on quantitative data that is already gathered by

institutions leading to in depth mixed methods studies. It can also stand alone, providing a different view point when it comes to areas such as grant development and evaluation, program studies, and interventions. Qualitative research allows institutional stakeholders ranging from students and faculty to staff and community members to have a more distinctive voice about different things that occur in the post-secondary institutions they work for, attend, and rely on.

Presenter: Mónica Alaniz, South Texas College

W3 Title: Beginning SAS Programming

Day: Tuesday, February 21

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: Copano

Description: This three-hour hands-on workshop is targeted at beginning or inexperienced SAS programmers in institutional research. During the workshop, participants will focus on the basics of SAS programming (DATA steps and PROCs), with a focus on skills commonly needed in institutional research. We will cover reading and writing text files and SAS datasets using basic DATA step programming, including subsetting data and creating new variables. Additionally, we will use SAS procedures for basic statistics (PROC MEANS) and reporting (PROC PRINT and PROC FREQ).

Presenter: Phil Rhodes, Houston Baptist University

W4 Title: National Student Clearinghouse StudentTracker

Day: Wednesday, February 22

Time: 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location: Laguna Madre

Description: This workshop provides an overview of the StudentTracker service from the National Student Clearinghouse. Topics include a general overview of StudentTracker, how to choose the appropriate query option, how to read the aggregate report, a conceptual overview of how to work with the student unit-level data in the detail report, and a review of the new enrollment and degree variables that were added to the student-level detail report at the end of 2011 including the current data coverage for these new variables and suggestions for ways they could be used.

Presenter: TBD, National Student Clearinghouse

W5 Title: Building a Sustainable Knowledge Infrastructure to Support Student Success

Day: Wednesday, February 22

Time: 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location: Aransas

Description: Presenters will guide participants through the iterative process of conducting a student-success research project. We will cover data retrieval, validation, restructuring, statistical analysis, advanced modeling, and interpretation. Given the longitudinal nature of student persistence, we will highlight event-history models. We will emphasize the importance of using database and analytical codes (SQL, SPSS, SAS, R) and of keeping a documentation system for project efficiency and sustainability. The session will enhance institutional researchers' capacity to support evidence-based practices through ongoing studies that are quickly adapted to different questions and easily updated for new student cohorts.

Presenter(s): Anthony Abrantes and Yan Xie, The University of Texas at El Paso

W6 Title: SAS Enterprise Guide: The Point-and-Click Interface to SAS

Day: Wednesday, February 22

Time: 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location: Matagorda

Description: This workshop is for analysts and managers who may or may not have SAS programming experience but need to access, manage, and summarize data from different sources, present results in tables and graphs, and perform statistical analysis. Although you can write, submit, and generate SAS programming code using SAS Enterprise Guide, this workshop will not teach the SAS programming language. Demonstrations in the workshop will use institutional research type data and tasks in illustrating the functionality of Enterprise Guide.

Presenters: Tom Bohannon and Jerry Oglesby, SAS Institute

W7 Title: Newcomers to Institutional Research

Day: Wednesday, February 22

Time: 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location: Copano

Description: The TAIR Newcomer's Workshop will focus on maintaining an effective institutional research office. Topics include the various roles and key responsibilities of institutional research, necessary skills needed for a researcher, primary dogmas of assessment (surveys and focus groups), research resources, academic accreditation, financial analysis and presentation of data. Included in the workshop will be guest panelists representing key areas of institutional research (THECB, public four-year and two-year, private four-year institutions) who will be presenting the "hot topics" for their areas of expertise.

Presenter: Marilyn Greer, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center

TAIR Membership FAQ

Kate Amorella Proff, Secretary



Photo Courtesy of Jeff Janko

Is membership limited to Institutional Research office staff?

No. Membership is open to any person who is “actively engaged in institutional research leading to improved understanding, planning, evaluation, policy analysis, institutional effectiveness and operation of higher education institutions.” (Article III, Section 8. TAIR Constitution) This means other individuals at your institution who might benefit from TAIR may also join. Graduate students pursuing an interest in institutional research may also seek membership.

Does membership start from the time I register and pay my fees?

TAIR membership runs on an annual cycle. The term of membership begins and ends at the annual conference. If you register for the conference, you are in good standing through the next conference. If you apply for membership AFTER the annual conference, your membership will only be active until the next conference.

How do I become a member or TAIR?

Becoming a member is easy! Visit <http://www.texas-air.org/member/membership.php> for details on membership benefits and information on registering online.