

News from . . .



Association for Institutional Research in the Upper Midwest

a professional organization for higher education institutional researchers

www.airum.org

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Change your bookmarks! AIRUM has a new website: www.airum.org

2005 AIRUM Conference



Elevating the Value of Institutional Research in Higher Education

The 2005 AIRUM conference will be held on November 10-11, 2005 at Hotel Sofitel in Bloomington, Minnesota.

Speakers will include Victor Borden, immediate past president of the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) and Karen Solomon from the Higher Learning Commission.

Call for Proposals

Proposals for the 2005 conference are encouraged from all types of institutions—private liberal arts colleges, public colleges (both large and small), and public systems.

Proposal deadline is August 13 to Bill Slanger (william.slanger@nds.edu). The proposal form is included with this newsletter and is at www.airum.org. Presentation categories are research paper, best practice, and roundtable.

Your presentation automatically makes you eligible for the “best presentation” nomination. The selected presentation will be invited to represent AIRUM, next year, at the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) national forum in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 10–14, 2006. (Note: vendors and invited speakers are *not eligible* to be nominated for the best presentation).

The 2004 Best Presentation

Congratulations to **Clare Huhn** selected as the **Best Presentation**—out of 11 possible presentations—for her research entitled, *UW-Madison’s New Freshman Class of 2018: Projections of High School Graduates, Applicants, Admits, and Enrollment by Race* at the 2004 AIRUM conference. Clare is Associate Policy and Planning Analyst at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She discussed how understanding the composition of Wisconsin high school graduating classes has important implications for the university’s admission process, enrollment management, diversity initiatives, and pre-college efforts.

As a result of her efforts, she received a \$500 stipend to attend the May 2005 AIR Forum in San Diego, California.

At the 2004 business meeting AIRUM members decided that presenters of the selected best presentation should receive a stipend to help defray the costs of attending AIR conferences.

Vendor Registration

Vendors will again have the opportunity to present their information and displays at the 2005 AIRUM conference. A vendor display fee will be charged and all potential vendors must register in advance. Visit www.airum.org for the *Vendor Registration Form*.

The State of AIRUM

AIRUM’s financial activity revolves around the annual fall conference. Most of AIRUM’s revenue is generated from conference registration fees. Most of the expenditures are on conference activities (food, technical equipment, room rental, and speaker costs). Other annual expenses include the cost of printing the semi-annual newsletter, and AIRUM’s scholarships.

Large increases in costs for technical equipment and food at the conference sites have contributed to increases in the conference registration fee in recent years. (I recently checked websites of other AIR affiliates, and at \$150, AIRUM's conference is still a bargain).

AIR recently offered its affiliates the opportunity for free website hosting. The AIRUM Steering Committee has decided to take advantage of this offer. The website changeover will be completely effective in June (www.airum.org) and will save AIRUM \$35 per month.

While I inherited the AIRUM Treasurer responsibilities with a cash reserve, the Steering Committee has dipped into this reserve to cover the costs of the past two conferences, primarily due to speaker costs. At the end of the 2004 accounting period (after all conference income and costs were complete), the AIRUM checking account balance was \$5,385. The shared goal of the Steering Committee members is to offer a high quality fall conference that is affordable and covers expenses without relying on the cash reserve.

Clare Huhn, AIRUM Treasurer

New to AIRUM?

Scholarships are available for up to \$250 each to cover most (or all) the expenses for two individuals to attend the November 2005 AIRUM conference. **Application deadline is October 17, 2005.** Visit www.airum.org for scholarship criteria.

Last year the Steering Committee awarded scholarships to three winners since no one applied for that year's AIR grant. AIRUM winners were **Annette Nelson** from Northland College, **Lynn Kalnbach** from the College of St. Scholastica, and **Takeski Yanagiura** from Minneapolis College.



Attending my first AIRUM conference was unbelievable! While previously conducting a few IR type reports, this group made me realize that IR is what I want to do on a full-time basis. The

information I received from the sessions was valuable, timely, and appropriate. The scholarship made all the difference in my ability to attend and participate. My departmental budget would not have enabled me to attend otherwise. However, I will now make whatever adjustments are needed to ensure continued attendance. It is worth every cent!

I have been a "first timer" at several conferences

in the past few years, and had become accustomed to sitting alone at lunch and wandering around lost. But this group of people went out of their way to make me feel comfortable and "one of them." I always felt IR folks were special . . . now I know for certain they are. I look forward to

continued relationships that began at AIRUM. Thanks to all of you who provided the scholarship dollars and who selected me to receive one. You all have made a tremendous impact on me.

*Annette Nelson
Northland College, Ashland, WI*

It was terrific to receive a scholarship to attend last fall's AIRUM conference in Bloomington as a first-time participant. I was new to institutional research, and as a result, I was very eager to learn more about how I could do my job better. What I actually ended up gaining was a better sense of all the different roles my job entailed and how to begin to organize and prioritize the various responsibilities.

Because I had been hired as the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment at The College of St. Scholastica two months before the AIRUM conference, I was particularly interested in the role of IR in assessment of student learning. I was able to attend Margie Tomsic's presentation on this topic. What was most enlightening to me from this presentation was that I was not alone in my struggle to combine and prioritize the dual roles of IR and assessment. Several other participants seemed to be trying to resolve many of the same issues I was facing.

Another wonderful benefit of attending the conference as a scholarship winner and first-time participant was that I was able to meet and get acquainted with other participants who were also attending AIRUM for the first time. I enjoyed

networking with these people, and I hope that I will continue to see them at future AIRUM conferences.

Lynn Kalnbach

*Director of Institutional Research and Assessment
The College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, MN*

First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to the steering committee that gave me a wonderful opportunity to attend the AIRUM conference in 2004. The conference was eye-opening for me, and full of wisdom and experiences. All sessions I participated in were well-prepared and so professional that I deepened my insight and understanding in regards to IR profoundly.

I was also fortunate to give my presentation on the project that I conducted at the Minneapolis Community and Technical College, where I have been working as a research intern. Since this was also my first conference presentation in my lifetime, I was severely nervous initially. It turned out to be a very exciting hour for me, however, thanks to brilliant participant and an excellent facilitator. The whole discussion was so constructive that time passed very quickly, and I also got useful feedback on my project.

The AIRUM conference was a great place for professional development as an institutional researcher. I enjoyed all aspects of the conference, and I would very much like to attend the AIRUM conference again this year. Thank you so much!

*Takeshi Yanagiura
Research Analyst*

*Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Minneapolis Community and Technical College*

2005 Steering Committee

New members, **Leonard Goldfine**, **Pradeep Kotamraju**, and **Margie Tomsic**, were elected at the 2004 conference replacing the three-year terms of **Cindy Crimmins**, **Tom Heaney**, and **Mary Soroko**.

There was a lot of interest in being on the committee. New membership is determined by a vote of the existing Steering Committee, which attempts to maintain a balance of geographical and institutional representation as required by the AIRUM Constitution.

Contact information for all eight steering committee members can be found at

www.airum.org.

Meet the New Members

Leonard Goldfine: My career in institutional research began somewhat atypically. I received a Bachelor of Music in Composition from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. I moved to Minnesota to study composition with Alex Lubet at the University of Minnesota. Most notable among my compositions is a clarinet, violin, and piano trio that just got performed in Zurich, Switzerland, and the theme music to “The Wacky Science Show” which ran for one season in Chicago.

I began taking courses in Educational Policy and Administration as a minor area of study. I enjoyed it so much that I stayed on to earn a Ph.D. My dissertation was titled “Spreading the Wealth:

Salary Dispersion in Academic Departments.” In the past six years I have worked with the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities’ Center for Teaching and Learning: Learning by Doing, the Center for School Change, the Postsecondary Educational Policy and Studies Center, the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, the University of Minnesota Office of the President, the University of Minnesota Faculty Senate, and Capella University.

I have been at Rochester Community and Technical College since July, 2004.

Pradeep Kotamraju: I’ve worked for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities for over five years and am currently the System Director for the Perkins Federal Grant. While there I’ve collaborated on several projects with the Office of the Chancellor, analyzing various system-wide institutional records on human resources, budget and finance; teaching and student data; and, the labor market engagement of graduates.

Besides data and project work, I’ve worked with several workforce and economic development agencies in the Twin Cities establishing and promoting more integrated workforce assessment, education and training, marketing and coordination activities.

Previously I worked at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

There I lead a research analysis unit producing a variety of reports on labor market and workforce development topics connecting occupations, skills and careers, as individuals transitioned back and forth between employment and education.

I've taught economics and statistics at several institutions in Minnesota and have published in the area of U.S. workforce development and the economic progress in the developing world.

After receiving my bachelor's degree from the University of Delhi, I went on to receive a master's degree from George Washington University and my doctorate in economics from the University of Illinois.

Margie Tomsic: I'm the Associate Dean of Assessment and Research at Saint Paul College, a public two-year institution that is part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System. I have served in this role since 2002 and have been an active member of AIRUM since 1989.

Previously, I worked in several institutional research capacities at the University of Minnesota for 13 years. My former position was as Director of Measurement Services and Statewide Testing.

I have a doctorate in Educational Psychology from the University of Oregon and am currently a board member at the Adler Graduate School. I'm an active member of the Collaboration for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning and my research interests include the assessment of student learning and master academic planning. Recently, I contributed a paper for the AIR-EAIR Symposium on reconciling access and quality in higher education.

I currently reside in St. Paul, Minnesota with my spouse, 14 year-old twin sons and four Kerry Blue Terriers.

2004 Conference Evaluation

Last fall the AIRUM conference was attended by 77 college staff/faculty from around the upper Midwest region.

Address Correct?

Send any address corrections to the treasurer, Clare Huhn, chuhn@vc.wisc.edu.

News from . . . AIRUM is published semi-annually. The fall issue will contain more detailed information about AIRUM's annual conference—costs, how to register, and session topics.

Conference Results		
<i>Based on a scale of 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor)</i>		
Item	N	Mean
Keynote: Michael Dolence	37	4.432
Keynote: Dana Offerman	37	4.344
Concurrent sessions	37	4.027
Range of topics covered	37	4.027
Opportunity for networking	37	4.378
Registration costs	37	4.405
Hotel costs	37	4.692
Quality of food	37	4.703
Hotel room accommodations	37	4.800
Location: Bloomington, MN	37	4.639
Conference Mean rating	37	4.514

Other specific comments were: "Hotel Sofitel is a great facility—reserve for the next 5 years! . . . It might be time to think about a \$20 annual membership fee instead of lifetime dues to help with costs Vendors are a good addition Need more aimed at new members, or people new to institutional research."

Due to the input of conference goers, the conference will be held again at the same location. It was also noted by the Steering Committee that the Hotel's conference staff was the best staff the Committee ever worked with in arranging a conference.

What is AIRUM?

AIRUM is a regional affiliate of the Association of Institutional Researchers (AIR—airweb.org), a national organization dedicated to the profession of institutional research. The objectives of AIRUM are to:

- improve and disseminate research predominantly of concern to institutions of higher education
- provide a collegium for professional persons in a common profession
- provide an avenue for professional accomplishment by offering at least an annual meeting at which papers may be presented, speeches given, workshops taught, and other such professional contributions made
- encourage association with the Association for Institutional Research and to promote AIR forums and other activities
- encourage professional identification, development and renewal