

▶ LETTER FROM THE CO-CHAIRS	1
▶ ACTION RESEARCH SERIES	2
▶ REGIONAL UPDATES FROM REGION I & II	3
▶ AER KC MISSION	3
▶ ANNUAL CONFERENCE: CONNECTING	4
▶ SOCIAL MEDIA	4
▶ AER KC SELECTED PROGRAMS	5
▶ AER MEETINGS AND EVENTS IN BALTIMORE ..	6
▶ APC CONFERENCE INFORMATION AND IMPORTANT LINKS	7
▶ KC LEADERSHIP	8

○ ISSUE 7 | ○ VOLUME 2 | ○ 2014

AER mail

THE ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND RESEARCH
KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER.

The following is a letter from the chairs of the Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Knowledge Community. You can find contact information for Nathan and Darby on page 8. Enjoy!

Dear NASPA Colleagues,

With the national conference just a few weeks away, our invitation to you is to use the conference to become more involved in our KC. We would be delighted to have more people involved in our social media efforts, newsletter writing, webinar series, outreach to undergraduate and graduate students, research grants and awards, and many other opportunities. As Alexander Astin has noted so often in his research, there are great benefits to being involved, and this certainly applies to

becoming more engaged in assessment!

We especially invite each of you to stop by the AER-KC table at the **NASPA Community Fair on Monday night from 7:00-9:00pm**. Also, please come to our open business meeting **Tuesday, March 18, from 8:00-9:00am**. During the meeting we will have opportunities to network with each other and plan for the coming year. We will also provide announcements regarding the AER-KC Assessment Award, the Spring

Assessment Webinar Series, and the NASPA Assessment and Persistence Conference (APC) in San Antonio. The AER-KC Assessment Award call for nominations will be announced in mid-March and the AERKC Spring Assessment Webinar series will take place during April and May.

We look forward to catching up with you in Baltimore, or meeting you for the first time!

Best regards,
Darby and Nathan



NASPA | KNOWLEDGE
COMMUNITY

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION,
AND RESEARCH



Action Research: Application for Student Affairs Assessment

By Erika Eckert, Kent State University and
Jermaine Williams, Northeastern Illinois University

Review of Action Research Steps

This article is the second in a series on action research and its utility for assessing student affairs practice. The last article featured an introduction to action research concepts and described the steps in an action research study:

To conduct an action research study, Slavin (2007) suggests a series of steps:

1. "Choose a manageable problem or issue to address" (p. 167).
2. "Determine the design of the study and what kind of data to collect" (p. 168).
3. "Collect the data" (p. 168).
4. If using, "Implement the new program or intervention over a set period of time" (p. 168).
5. If using a new treatment, "Collect further data during the new program or intervention" (p. 169).
6. "All stakeholders work together to analyze the data" (p. 169).
7. "Determine an action plan based on the findings" (p. 169).

Having introduced action research in the last article, this piece will identify why action research could, and should, be implemented by student affairs professionals by focusing on its important characteristics.

Why Action Research is Viable for Student Affairs Professionals

There are several key components to action research that make it ideal for student affairs professionals. Action research can be utilized to meet the increasing demands for accountability from employers, non-profits reporting on outcomes of higher education, state and federal legislatures, accrediting bodies, students, families, and institutions. This research approach has a focus on feedback, not solely evaluation; this is a strategy Astin and Antonio (2012) identify as a successful approach to the practical application of assessment.

Action Research and Change-Making

Action research supports the improvement of programs and services within current

surroundings and can be integrated into daily work. It does not require control groups, experimental conditions, or a specific data collection approach (Slavin, 2007). Furthermore, this strategy has historically been incorporated because it has the capability to generate social change and equity (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Lewin, 1946; Slavin, 2007). In many institutions of higher education, social change and equity are major areas of focus, and are achieved in large part through student affairs. The action research approach can also be employed to pursue meaningful change by supporting data-informed decisions focused on the improvement of student learning and development.

Action Research and Local Interest

If you have questions about this article please contact Erika Eckert directly at eeckert@kent.edu or Jermaine Williams directly at j-williams26@neiu.edu

Because the focus of action research is addressing issues at the local level, it is natural that this approach would support department, and institution, specific programs and services by being integrated within assessment planning/cycles. Action research may be

conducted by persons who do not have advanced-level training in academic research methods (Slavin, 2007) which makes it accessible to academics and practitioners, alike. This provides an opportunity for assessment that is inquiry-based (deriving from questions that arise organically) and can result in findings that can be shared. It is important to note that action research focuses on local phenomena and is not appropriate to interpret or reinforce social systems and/or concepts (Culp & Dungy, 2012) by generalizing to other contexts (Slavin, 2007).

Action Research and Accessibility/Flexibility

In action research, the primary investigator is generally connected to the topic in a meaningful way—the idea is one that the researcher is not a detached observer, but one keenly interested in the outcome (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Slavin, 2007). Projects are often practical in nature, such as exploring the impact of policies within a unit, such as student affairs. As previously noted, the

(Continued on page 7)



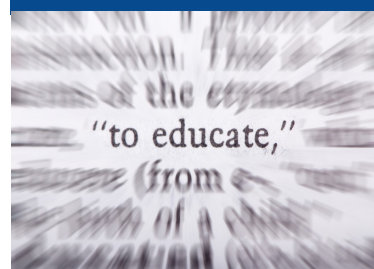
Action Research Series:

This is the first piece in a series on action research.

Each series piece will delve into a more complex part of action research.

We look forward to this series sparking conversations on your campus and within our KC. If you have feedback on this series or ideas for additional series topics e-mail Melissa Kisubika at kisubika@illinois.edu

DO YOU HAVE KNOWLEDGE TO SHARE?



If you would like to share assessment knowledge with the rest of the AER KC send your submissions to the AER Newsletter.

Please send an email to :

Melissa Kisubika
(kisubika@illinois.edu)

NASPA Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Knowledge Community Mission Statement

The NASPA Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Knowledge Community encourages and supports student affairs professionals, faculty and graduate students at institutions across the country and throughout the world as they systematically assess learning, evaluate programs, and research theory and practice as it relates to our profession. By providing quality education and networking opportunities for those that engage in assessment, evaluation and research in student affairs, the Knowledge Community strives to serve as a driving force in the movement towards improved student learning.

Region II Conference **SAVE the DATE**

June 8-10, 2014
Atlantic City, NJ

<http://www.naspa.org/events/2014-region-ii-conference>

Regional Spotlight—Region 1 *A Match Made in Assessment*

Submitted by Peter Fowler, Wentworth Institute of Technology – on behalf of the AER KC Leadership Team

There is no big secret about assessment. It's important. More than important, with accreditation and accountability, it's vital to the success of our profession, our institutions, and our students. Assessment is a common course in graduate programs, always a presentation topic at regional conferences and drive-ins, and coupled with persistence at a NASPA national conference (visit <http://www.naspa.org/events/2014APC> to learn more about the Assessment and Persistence Conference in San

Antonio, June 19-21, 2014). As both the value and need for collecting and using information on our students increases, a struggle to do assessment continues. Where do I begin? What do I want to assess? My students are over-surveyed. You've heard these before.

This past fall, the Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Knowledge Community (AER KC) developed a unique opportunity that would match professionals who wanted to do assessment but needed some guidance or support with a colleague in the region who has had vast experience with assessment. The "expert" could offer advice on a specific assessment tool, explore options for choosing the right assessment method for a project, or talk about where to begin. The goal of this coaching relationship is to increase the accessibility and utilization of assessment throughout the region. To date, there are 11 coaches assisting 13 colleagues with their assessment activities. One of our matches shared their experience with the assessment coaching:

"The greatest benefit of the program is the personal attention. Conferences and seminars can be beneficial, but my relationship with my coach has allowed me to share where my department is in our assessment process, receive suggestions to develop a plan specific to what we need, and have follow-up to evaluate progress. I hope that more people take advantage of this ideal experience to better their programs and their own assessment skills." (Mike Ormsby, University of Hartford)

"I am very excited about the assessment coaching program because assessment is critical to our ability to demonstrate how student affairs contributes to student learning and success. I am hoping this program becomes a tool that links professionals in the region so they can share their growing expertise in the assessment area, and expand what is happening on all our campuses to provide evidence of the impact of our work. In my experience the hardest part is often getting started, and ongoing conversation and coaching helps to demystify what "assessment" is (or should be) and assist people in breaking it down into manageable concepts/ pieces so they can get started on a plan that makes sense for their program(s)." (Cathy Holbrook, Bridgewater State University)

Our hope has been that these matches evolve into long-term supportive professional relationships. If you are interested in participating in assessment coaching (either as a coach or someone seeking a coach), please contact Peter Fowler, Associate Dean of Students, at Wentworth Institute of Technology at fowlerp@wit.edu.

The AER KC would also like to acknowledge and thank our coaches who have volunteered their time and expertise: Phil

(Continued on page 6)



Connect with
#NASPA14
&
#SAASSESS

2014 NASPA Virtual Conference

Are you unable to attend? No worries.

NASPA is excited to offer a groundbreaking learning opportunity to bring together student personnel administrators from around the world for the inaugural 2014 NASPA Virtual Conference! Virtual conference attendees will be on the cutting edge for outstanding educational opportunities, be able to share best practices within a digital platform, are able to ask questions and interact with speakers and attendees live from the comfort of your home or office. Virtual conference registrants will have access to the opening and closing sessions, and some of the hottest featured speakers and educational sessions of the 2014 NASPA Annual Conference. This is a live virtual extension of the 2014 NASPA Annual Conference in Baltimore, MD, with live broadcasts March 16 – 18, 2014.

Need more of a reason—check out the
[Top 10 Reasons to Participate](#)

[NASPA Mobile App](#)

“NASPA Mobile App.” Powered by Guidebook, the NASPA Mobile App is a single app that you’ll only need to download once. After that you’ll have access to “Guides” created by the NASPA National office, Regions, Knowledge Communities, BACCHUS and more!

Downloading the NASPA Mobile App is simple! Whether you’re on an [iOS](#) or [Android](#) device, you can download the app by going to your app store and searching for “NASPA Mobile App.” Once it has been downloaded you can load the Guide of the conference that you’re attending. It literally takes less than a minute!

NASPA Annual Conference **March 15-19, 2014** **Baltimore, Maryland**

The headquarter hotel and the closest hotel in proximity to the convention center is the Hilton Baltimore. In addition, NASPA has secured hotel room blocks at a number of hotels near the Baltimore Convention Center. Housing is still available at some locations.

In 2014, we’re shaking things up with sessions that aim to inspire and involve beyond the usual PowerPoint presentation.

Don’t forget to check out the keynote speakers—
<http://conference2014.naspa.org/program/speakers>

Social Media

We will be posting new and exciting information every Wednesday on Facebook so make sure you check out the page.

To “like” the NASPA AER KC page, click on the following link or paste into your browser:
<http://www.facebook.com/NASPAERKC>



Become our fan on
Facebook

We also launched AER into the twitters-sphere, so that we can communicate with KC members throughout the day and week in regards to all NASPA and assessment related topics

Follow us [@NASPA_AERKC](#)



Follow us on Twitter

AER KC Conference Selected Programs

Saturday, March 15	Venue/ Room
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	
Mentors in Measurement: Teaching Assessment in Student Affairs	349 - Convention Center
Monday, March 17	Venue/ Room
8:30 AM - 9:20 AM	
Creating a Culture of Evidence: Expectations of Student Affairs in the Reaffirmation Process	329 - Convention Center
Partners in Curiosity: The Binghamton Data Detective Agency Case 001	317 - Convention Center
10:00 AM - 10:50 AM	
Assessment is a Marathon not a Sprint - UT Arlington's Journey	341 - Convention Center
Integration of Learning: Strategies to Promote and Assess Intercontextual Learning	321 - Convention Center
11:05 AM - 11:55 AM	
Politics and Ethics in Student Affairs Assessment: The Who, How, and Why of Decision Making	342 - Convention Center
1:15 PM - 2:05 PM	
Essential Skills for Assessment: Things Student Affairs Personnel Should Know (or Learn)	338 - Convention Center
2:35 PM - 3:25 PM	
Developing an Assessment Plan: Foundational Skills for New Professionals and Graduate Students	318 - Convention Center
Understanding Assessment in Professional Practice	342 - Convention Center
3:40 PM - 4:30 PM	
Assessing Student Learning in Community and Two-Year Colleges: Retooling for the Future	322 - Convention Center
Building Collaborations for Assessment in Student Affairs: Partnerships in Education and Practice	341 - Convention Center

Tuesday, March 18	Venue/ Room
8:30 AM- 9:20 AM	
Navigating the Development of Learning Outcomes	321 - Convention Center
The Wild World of Data and Student Persistence: Can We Take Their Money When We Know They'll Fail?	319 - Convention Center
10:00 AM - 10:50 AM	
Change We Can Believe In: Building and Sustaining a Culture of Assessment in Student Affairs	342 - Convention Center
From Evaluate to Innovate: Using the CAS Standards for Program Assessment and Enhancement	329 - Convention Center
11:05 AM - 11:55 AM	
Planning for Best Practices to Avoid Putting the Assessment Cart before the Learning Horse	316 - Convention Center
Writing your institutional assessment story	338 - Convention Center
12:10 PM - 1:00 PM	
Assessment Reconsidered - Why direct measures are necessary and how to implement them	338 - Convention Center
Evaluability Assessment: Enhancing Program Design and Performance	343 - Convention Center
1:15 PM - 2:05 PM	
Running a 30-year longitudinal assessment project of student satisfaction in the halls: Lessons learned	340 - Convention Center
2:20 PM - 3:10 PM	
Integrating Assessment and Strategic Planning in Student Affairs	343 - Convention Center
Where's Your Proof? Demonstrating Impact with Purposeful Assessment	325 - Convention Center
3:25 PM - 4:15 PM	
Student Affairs and the Institutional Accreditation Process: Creating Successful Assessment Strategies	345 - Convention Center
Utilizing Data at Every Level	317 - Convention Center

*These are a select number of the outstanding programs that will be available during the annual conference. You can find the complete list of programs and an itinerary planning tool at <http://apps.naspa.org/sch/>

The Annual Knowledge Community Conference Publication

Check out all of the great publications from each of the Knowledge Communities. You can find the Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Knowledge Community contribution on page 17—7 *Elements: Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Evidence in Student Affairs*. Thank you to Brenda Woods, Director of Research and Assessment for Student Affairs at Georgia Institute of Technology for your contribution.

Check out the entire publication now—
<http://apps.naspa.org/files/2014-Spring-KC-Publication-Final.pdf>

(Continued from page 3)

Bernard (Wentworth Institute of Technology); Aileen Doneski (Massachusetts Institute of Technology); Peter Fowler (Wentworth Institute of Technology); Mary Jo Gonzales (University of Rhode Island); Cathy Holbrook (Bridgewater State University); Nilam Kotadia (Massachusetts Institute of Technology); Beth Moriarty (Bridgewater State University); Katie O'Dair (Boston College); Judy Robinson (Massachusetts Institute of Technology); and Dan Volchok (Northeastern University).

To get involved with the AER KC Leadership Team, please contact Judy Robinson, Associate Dean of Student Outreach and Support, at Massachusetts Institute of Technology at judyrob@mit.edu.

Meetings and Events in Baltimore

Monday, March 17, 2014

Regional Business Meetings

5:30 PM – 6:30 PM

314-340 Convention Center

NASPA Community Fair

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Key Ballroom - (7-12) - Hilton

*If you are interested in volunteering to help at the AER table contact Melissa Kisubika at Kisubika@illinois.edu

NASPA Regional Receptions

9:00 PM – 11:00 PM

308 – 317 Convention Center

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

AERKC Business Meeting

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Paca - Hilton

NASPA Annual Business Meeting

4:45 PM – 5:45 PM

310 - Convention Center

CONGRATS

to

Innovation Award
Recipient

Michael Christakis

Assistant Vice President
University at Albany

The Student Learning Project: Evidence
of Co-Curricular Student Learning



(Continued from page 2)

researcher can employ a variety of data collection techniques; documents, observations, interviews, field notes, documents, articles, trade journals, advertisements, etc. (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Assessment often relies on similar data sources (Palomba & Banta, 1999). Action research “is an approach to assessment situates data close to practice...it is highly credible and has great utility in informing new planning and action” (Culp & Dungy, 2012, p. 99)

Action Research and Assessment Summary

Assessment is conducted at a local level by dedicated practitioners focused on improvement. Action research shares these characteristics, which makes it an accessible research approach with obvious application for assessment. The data collection techniques can vary and should be selected to best support the aims of the study. The researcher is usually connected to the program or service being studied, and has a genuine interest in enhancing or making change in power or social structures. Because student affairs is generally focused on social change and has much internal diversity by functional area, a research approach that is flexible has great potential for application.

The subsequent installment will provide profiles in action research. The goal will be to identify successful action research projects that student affairs professionals can utilize as a framework – further illustrating how action research can be integrated into an assessment plan.

References

- Astin, A. W. & Antonio, L. A. (2012). *Assessment for excellence: The philosophy and practice of assessment and evaluation in higher education*. (2nd ed.). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (3rd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Culp, M. M. & Dungy, G. J. (Eds.). 2012. *Building a culture of evidence in student affairs: A guide for leaders and practitioners*. Washington, DC: NASPA – Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education.
- Klein, S. R. (2012). *Action Research Methods: Plain and Simple*. Retrieved from <http://www.ebilib.com>
- Lewin, K. (1946). *Action research and minority problems*. Retrieved from http://bscw.wineme.fb5.uni-siegen.de/pub/nj_bscw.cgi/d759359/5_1_ActionResearchandMinorityProblems.pdf
- Palomba, C. A., & Banta, T. W. (1999). *Assessment essentials: Planning, implementing, and improving assessment in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Slavin, R. E. (2007). *Educational research in an age of accountability*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Assessment and Persistence Conference

June 19 – June 21, 2014

Hyatt Regency - San Antonio, Texas



The 2014 NASPA Assessment & Persistence Conference is designed to promote student learning and success by strengthening assessment, improving educational quality, and developing intentional persistence programming.

Registration is now OPEN!

Visit: <http://www.naspa.org/events/2014APC>. Early bird registration ends April 18, 2014. Make sure to get registered today to attend APC.

Important Links

NASPA Homepage

<http://www.naspa.org/>

NASPA Annual Conference Homepage

<http://conference2014.naspa.org/>

Assessment and Persistence Conference

<http://www.naspa.org/events/2014APC>

AER KC Homepage

<http://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/kcs/assessment-evaluation-and-research>

AER Resources Page

<http://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/kcs/assessment-evaluation-and-research/resources>

**If you have resources you think would make good additions to this page please send them to Kisubika@illinois.edu.*

AER Knowledge Community Leadership Team and Committee Leadership

*Below you will find the names, institutions and
e-mail contacts for members of the Leadership Team and Committee Leadership.*

National Co-Chairs

Nathan Lindsay

University of Missouri-Kansas City
lindsayn@umkc.edu

Darby Roberts

Texas A & M University
darby@tamu.edu

Past Co-Chairs

Lance Kennedy-Phillips

Ohio State University,
lkennedy-phillips.1@osu.edu

Ellen Meents-DeCaigny

DePaul University
emeentsd@depaul.edu

Region One

Judith McGuire Robinson,

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
judyrob@mit.edu

Region Two

Ryan Keytack

University of Pennsylvania
keytack@pobox.upenn.edu

Region Three

Alicia Caudill Colburn

Gainesville State College
acaudill@gsc.edu

Region Four – East

Jermaine Williams

Northeastern Illinois University
j-williams26@neiu.edu

Region Four – West

Teresa Clouch

Baker University
tclouch@bakeru.edu

Region Five

Stacy Ackerlind

University of Utah
Sackerlind@sa.utah.edu

Region Six

Sandra Mahoney

University of the Pacific
smahoney@pacific.edu

At-Large Members

Erin Bentrim

Old Dominion University
EBentrim@odu.edu

Ted Elling

University of North Carolina at
Charlotte
twelling@uncc.edu

Michael Christakis

University at Albany
mchristakis@albany.edu

Melissa Kisubika

University of Illinois at Urbana-
Champaign
kisubika@illinois.edu

Andy Mauk

University of North Carolina—
Wilmington
mauka@uncw.edu

Diane Waryas

Touro University Nevada
Diane.Waryas@tun.touro.edu



Committee Leadership:

Sponsored Programs

Jermaine Williams
Northeastern Illinois University

Andy Mauk
University of North Carolina—
Willimington

Conference Events

Nathan Lindsay
University of Missouri - Kansas
City

Communications/Newsletter/ Social Media

Melissa Kisubika
University of Illinois at Urbana-
Champaign

Research and Scholarship Committee

Amy Franklin
Northern Illinois University

Awards Committee

Stacy Ackerlind
University of Utah

Webinar Series Coordinator

Lance Kennedy-Phillips
Ohio State University

