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 7. Enjoy!

Dear NASPA Colleagues,

We hope that your summer is starting off smoothly and you have time to breathe a little. If you are looking for assessment rejuvenation, please join us at the NASPA Assessment and Persistence Conference (APC) in San Antonio, June 19-21. The sessions promise to be informative and engaging; the keynote speakers (Alexander Astin and Luis Ponjuan) will challenge us to move forward as a profession. We will also be hosting a KC business meeting on June 21 at 7:30 a.m.

If you can't join us for APC, there are still ways to engage in the Knowledge Community. We hope that you have joined us for the webinar series that just wrapped up—we will be putting together another great series for the fall. In addition, we are always looking for people to contribute brief articles for the newsletter or the NASPA KC publication. If you are looking for places to learn more, be sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter. We also encourage you to connect with your AER KC Regional Representative. They have a wealth of knowledge about events and opportunities going on at the regional level.

It's never too early to think about presenting at the next NASPA national conference in New Orleans, March 21-25 (http://www.naspa.org/events/2015-naspa-annual-conference#about). The call for programs is already open, and the KC will be recognizing several sessions as being sponsored by the KC. Yours could be one of them!

Please let know how we can continue to serve you.

Enjoy your summer!

Darby and Nathan

NASPA | KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND RESEARCH

Action Research at the Movies

By Brian Dietz, Kalamazoo College

The concept of action research was introduced and discussed in previous editions of this newsletter; this article will describe an action research project conducted at Kalamazoo College. The article follows Slavin's (2007) seven step process as described by Eckert and Willams (2013) in previous AER KC Newsletters.

1. **Choose a manageable problem or issue to address**

The Student Activities Office (SAO) was concerned with low turnout for programs and events. A lot of time, energy, and student fee money were spent on providing programs, however, attendance was often less than expected, and at times, just plain disappointing. The SAO identified low student attendance at campus events as a problem they wanted to address; the goal of the action research project was to improve attendance by becoming more informed about student preferences and needs related to campus entertainment.

2. **Determine the design of the study and what kind of data to collect**

To address the issue, the SAO decided to explore the types of entertainment and events students wanted to see on campus. The SAO also wanted to understand when and where these events should be held.

3. **Collect the data**

Data was collected in several ways, including both formal and informal collection methods. Surveys were distributed to students; these surveys asked students what type of events they wanted to see, when these events should happen, where, etc. The SAO also set up poster-boards in high traffic areas of campus, and asked students to write down suggestions for campus entertainment. Additionally, SAO staff gathered information during several informal conversations - walking across campus, at lunch, at the end of other meetings, etc.

Along with collecting student preferences and opinions, the SAO also completed a brief internal audit to identify resources available for student programs, including program funding levels, available staff time, and specific facilities and equipment.

4. **All stakeholders work together to analyze the data**

Data from the various collection methods (poster-boards, surveys, convenience interviews) were compiled and analyzed for themes and common threads. Through this analysis, feature films, dances, and craft programs emerged as some of the top recurring suggestions. Data also indicated students wanted regularly scheduled programs (i.e. series programming – weekly, monthly, etc.) Along with the data provided by students, the SAO also considered findings from their internal audit as they worked to determine the best program options.

5. **Determine an action plan based on the data**

As a result of the data analysis, a movie series was chosen as the program to pursue. A plan to show current, popular films on campus several times each term was designed. Budget monies were allocated, and a staffing and promotion structure was created.

6. **Implement the new program or intervention over a set period of time**

The SAO contracted with a vendor to secure Public Performance Rights for films, and began showing movies on several weekends of the next term. The day of week, time of the film, and the location of the events, generally followed student suggestions.

7. **Collect further data during the new program or intervention**

As part of the action plan, the SAO collected attendance data and event evaluations at each movie. Since attendance numbers were lower than anticipated, the evaluations were studied for clues to an explanation. The evaluations revealed some negative opinions of the program series. Informal interviews with some students then provided more detail about these opinions and identified specific
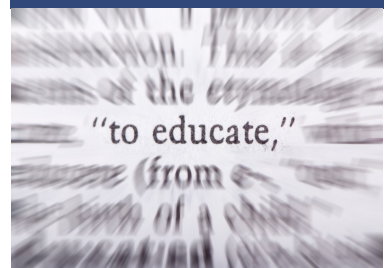
If you have questions about this article please contact Brian Dietz directly at Brian.Dietz@kzoo.edu

Action Research Series:

This is the third and final piece in our series on action research. We hope this series has sparked 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?

"to educate," from

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 county 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.

Regional Spotlight—Region VI
University of the Pacific: Ted K. Miller Achievement of Excellence Award

The Division of Student Life at University of the Pacific this winter was awarded the Ted K. Miller Achievement of Excellence Award by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). The award also carries a $1,000 prize. The Miller Award selection committee cited the pervasive commitment to meaningful assessment of programs, services and outcomes by University of the Pacific's Division of Student Life as evidenced by the application materials, which demonstrated a culture of assessment oriented to student learning.

Founded in 1979, CAS is the pre-eminent force for promoting standards in student affairs, student services, and student development programs. The Ted K. Miller Achievement of Excellence Award was established to be given to an individual, higher education institution, or professional association in recognition of outstanding accomplishments in advancing standards of practice and quality assurance in educational programs and services in higher education. It is named in honor of CAS's first president from 1979-1989.

The AER KC would also like to acknowledge and thank our coaches who have volunteered their time and expertise: Phil Bernard (Wentworth Institute of Technology); Aideen 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.

Connect with
#APC2014
&
#SAASSESS

The Assessment and Persistence Conference is this week!

We hope many of you will be attending and continuing to learn and appreciate assessment. If you are attending make sure you keep the conversations going by using #SAASSESS and including @NASPA_AERKC. You can find information including a schedule at **http://www.naspa.org/events/2014APC**.

Keep a look out for this year's Conference Themes:
1. Fundamentals of Assessment
2. Assessment Methods and Measurements
3. The Role of Data in Institutional Decision Making
4. Institutional Persistence & Retention Initiatives, Financial Aid, & Enrollment Management
5. Persistence of Special Student Populations
6. Integrated Assessment, Persistence, and Retention Practices

AER KC Business meeting June 21 at 7:30am in Rio Grande East

We hope you will be able to attend this meeting during the conference to learn more
about our KC and how you can get more involved!

Social Media

Become our fan on Facebook

Follow us on Twitter and use #SAASSESS

To "like" the NASPA AER KC page, click on the following link or paste into your browser:
http://www.facebook.com/NASPAAERKC

Follow us **@NASPA_AERKC**

Join our the AER Blog!!

There are two great ways to be a part of the conversation on the AER KC Blog.

1. **Sign-up to contribute and be published on the blog!**
   Read a great journal article? You can summarize it for the blog. Been working on some research or a great new process of assessment—give us the low down and share it with the whole AER Community. Contact Melissa Kisubika (Kisubika@illinois.edu) for information on how to sign up to contribute.

2. **Comment on a blog post and keep conversations going!**

Be sure to adjust your settings in your member profile to make sure you receive the blog digest for all KC's.

concerns, including the fact the audio system did not provide quality sound, the seats were fixed and caused obstructed views, and students were often confused by changing times/days for the movies. With new data in hand, the movie series was changed to address these issues. Revisions to the series included: implementing a consistent time and date (weekly at 9:30pm on Friday), and relocating to a larger lecture hall with tiered seating, a better sound system, and a larger projection screen. The SAO also borrowed a popcorn machine and provided refreshments to those in attendance by setting up a small concession stand.

During the next term, attendance began to grow. Program evaluations were collected and additional small adjustments were made accordingly – such as new concession items, and promotional ideas. The movie series continued to grow in popularity and is now discussed as part of campus tours when the College is highlighting entertainment and involvement opportunities for students. This action research project successfully addressed the problem of low attendance and resulted in a solution in the form of a highly successful program series for students.

Action research worked very well in this situation and helped the Student Activities Office effectively address a problem through a structured and systematic approach. This model will be used to address other problems for the office, as it was a pragmatic and effective method for improving the work of the office and enhancing programs and services for students.

References

Eckert, E., & Williams, J. (2013). NASPA assessment, evaluation, and research newsletter: Action research introductory piece. AER Mail, 2(6).

Eckert, E., & Williams, J. (2013). Action research: Application for student affairs assessment. AER Mail, 2(7).

Slavin, R.E. (2007). Educational research in an age of accountability. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

NASPA Annual Conference
March 21-25, 2015
New Orleans, LA

NAVIGATING with COURAGE
2015 NASPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
MARCH 21–25, 2015 NEW ORLEANS

Join us in New Orleans to connect with colleagues and redefine the future of higher education. You'll be inspired by thought provoking speakers, meet colleagues from around the world, and return to campus with the tools needed to navigate the constantly changing landscape of student affairs.

The NASPA Annual Conference is a four-day gathering of student affairs professionals who come together to learn, grow, and be inspired. Whether you're presenting or an active participant, the NASPA Annual Conference is the single best professional development and networking opportunity for you.

Registration is now OPEN!

Visit: **http://conference2015.naspa.org/** for more information. Register now through June 30 at the 2014 registration rates!

You can already start connecting by using #NASPA15

Important Links

NASPA Homepage
http://www.naspa.org/

NASPA Annual Conference Homepage
http://conference2015.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.

2014-2015 Paul P. Fidler Research Grant
Call for Proposals

The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition invites applications for the 2014-2015 Paul P. Fidler Research Grant. The Paul P. Fidler Research Grant is designed to encourage the development and dissemination of knowledge to improve the experiences of college students in transition.

With an award package that includes a stipend, travel to two national conferences, a presentation at a national conference, and priority consideration for publication, the Paul P. Fidler Research Grant supports and promotes research with the potential to have a national or international impact on student success. The Center invites applicants to submit proposals for research projects addressing a variety of topics, which may include underrepresented student populations, community colleges, advising, transfer and articulation, career development, and other issues related to college student transitions.

Comprehensive Award Package
- Stipend of $5,000
- Travel to the 21st National Conference on Students in Transition, October 2014, in Denver, Colorado, at which the award will be presented
- Announcement and recognition at the 20th National Conference on Students in Transition luncheon
- Travel to the 22nd National Conference on Students in Transition, October 2015, at which the research findings will be reported
- Announcement on the National Resource Center webpage, listservs, and print publications
- Priority consideration for publication by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

Application and Submission Deadline
Grant submission officially opens on April 1, 2014. The application form may be accessed at **www.sc.edu/fye/fidler** and must be submitted electronically using the online form by

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NASPA 2015 Annual Conference
CALL FOR PROGRAMS
STRENGTH, COURAGE, AND CONFIDENCE

The 2015 Conference Leadership Planning Committee is excited to hear from you! Submit a program (or more than one!) and share your fresh and creative ideas with the participants of the 97th NASPA Annual Conference. Gather your colleagues or use the NASPA Presenter Match to submit programs with multiple perspectives and from varied institutions.

The Call for Programs Deadline is Friday, September 5, 2014.

Both NASPA members and non-members* may submit programs to the NASPA Annual Conference. There are several program types and each has its own guidelines and review process. You can submit more than one program type, but make sure the description matches the delivery! All programs should include the following:
1. New and fresh contributions to the NASPA Annual Conference theme and/or student affairs profession.
2. Engaging program format that involves the audience and stimulates discussion.
3. Conceptually strong foundation, well-written, with clearly stated outcomes and appropriately documented research and/or experience.
4. Qualified presenters with expertise in the subject matter

More information on the conference themes, effective proposal writing, submission criteria, and how to submit can be found at http://conference2015.naspa.org/present

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.

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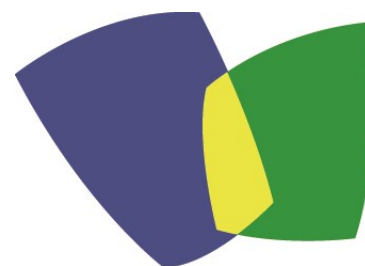Charlotte
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