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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. Enjoy!



Dear Colleagues:

As the new Co-Chairs of the KC, we are excited to serve in this capacity and look forward to an exciting couple of years working to enhance the competencies of NASPA members in the topic of assessment, evaluation, and research. As you all know, our work is critical to the field of student affairs as we demonstrate how our work enhances the lives of students. As Co-Chairs, we hope to lead a highly-talented group of colleagues from around the country through many worthwhile activities that will enhance your NASPA membership and your skills in your chosen profession.

The AER KC has launched a new Strategic Plan, and our work over the next several years will be focused on five themes:

- Awards, Recognition, and Sponsorship
- Coaching and Mentorship
- Communication and Outreach
- Finance
- Professional Development

We are currently finalizing our leadership team, and each member will be serving in various capacities related to the Strategic Plan. We'll also be launching a "Call for Volunteers" soon to recruit interested professionals to assist us in our work to develop assessment, evaluation, and research capacities across the country. So, please watch your email for more exciting opportunities.

Finally, we look forward to seeing many of you at the annual Assessment & Persistence Conference in Orlando, FL, later this week! As always, if you ever have any comments, questions, or feedback about the AER KC, please do not hesitate to reach out to either of us.

See you in Orlando,

Stacy Ackerlind & Andy Mauk



Assessment, Evaluation,
and Research KC

Assessment and Persistence Conference 2017

June 15 – June 17, 2017

Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress, Orlando, Florida

We hope many of you will be attending and continuing to learn and appreciate assessment at #APC17. 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 <https://www.naspa.org/events/2017APC#schedule>

Keep a look out for this year's Conference Themes and find out more about each theme on the [APC webpage](#):

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

Remember to stay engaged with the AER KC after the conference by contributing to the blog or social media!

Connect with
#APC17 &
#SAASSESS

2017

NASPA

Assessment and

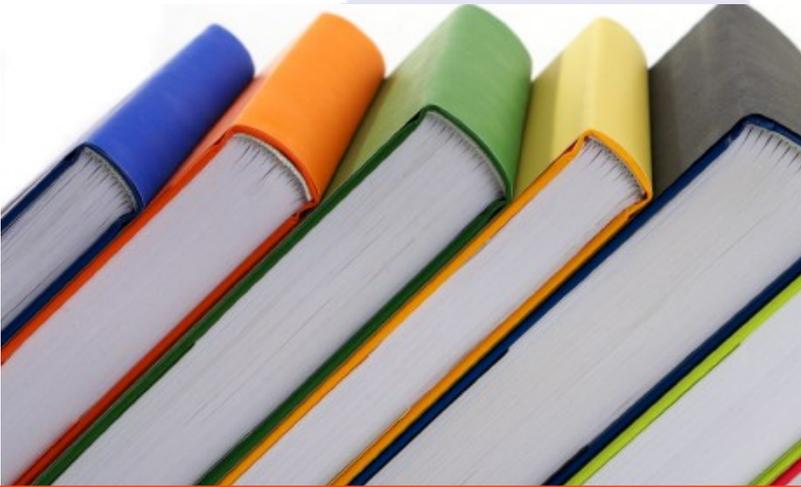
Persistence Conference

Assessment and Persistence Conference—Items to Note

We know that it can often be daunting to select programs sessions to attend at conferences. Although there are not sponsored programs at #APC17, we hope you will consider joining our KC at an [Afternoon Dialogue session on Friday, June 16 from 2:30-3:30PM in Grand Cypress A](#)

A full list of programs and descriptions can be found [HERE](#). Or you can access the schedule via the NASPA mobile App.

If you are presenting at #APC17, be sure to tweet us and let us know! We would love to interact with you regarding your session.



What's on your summer reading list? What are you trying to get through before students return in the fall or are you using a great read to help shape your planning for the next year?

Share those book titles and a short review with the whole AER KC. Send your book titles and a short recap/review of the book to Kisubika@illinois.edu or you can send the AER KC a message on Facebook or Twitter.

We look forward to sharing with the KC the wonderful books that are shaping our work this summer!

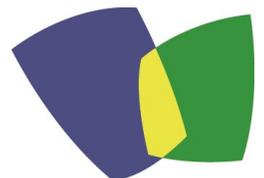
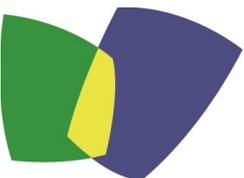
In Memoriam

Rebecca Szwarc—
University of Houston

It is with heavy hearts that the AER KC leadership shares the passing of a valuable member of the AER community.

Rebecca Szwarc was a member of the University of Houston campus community. She was a part of the Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Innovation Award winning team in 2016 led by Dr. Pamelyn Shefman.

If you would like more information about services please visit—<http://www.uh.edu/staff-council/>



Innovation Award Winner—Overview

Dr. Dawna Wilson Horton, Research Analyst and Dr. Kimberly Lowry, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Student Success at Eastfield College are the 2017 recipients of the NASPA Assessment, Evaluation and Research Knowledge Community Innovation Award.

Dawna and Kimberly are being recognized for their innovative approach to improving peak registration through assessment. Historically, Eastfield College practiced limited to procedural reviews of student affairs processes and procedures. When faced with mounting complaints regarding registration inefficiencies, Horton and Lowry designed and implemented a comprehensive registration assessment plan between 2015 and 2017. Relying on both broad quantitative and deep qualitative methods, students and employees provided data focused around a need to enhance customer service, focus on employee training, communication and physical space for peak registration.

Based on the data, changes were implemented in stages. The most recently collected data indicates steady improvement in our processes as well as student and employee experiences. Assessment outcomes further revealed recurring concerns that stemmed from departments' siloed approaches to conducting registration.

Horton and Lowry's assessment initiative has impacted students, employees, administrators and our college as a whole. Unexpectedly, this effort has prompted a new level of engagement by students and staff. For example, both groups expressed heart-felt appreciation for being formally asked their opinions, believing their voices would make a difference and eagerly volunteered for subsequent focus groups. From an administrative perspective, we see more clearly the need to gather critical data from key stakeholders when planning and making decisions. Finally, our college has adopted a campus-wide, collaborative approach to peak registration. All student affairs, deans and directors formally and intentionally come to the table with directors of the business office, financial aid, facilities, information technology, and marketing to jointly plan, implement and review peak registration.

Through their innovative efforts, Drs. Horton and Lowry underscored the value and need for assessment when pursuing continuous improvement among student support services. More importantly, they shifted mindsets and moved our institution forward in building a culture of assessment within our student affairs division.

Please join us in recognizing this outstanding research team for their efforts to improve the culture of assessment!



Innovation Award—Honorable Mention

Inclusive Assessment Practices

Ciji Heiser and Allan Blattner
Housing and Residential Education
UNC Chapel Hill

The field of student affairs has long valued the principles of social justice, equity, and inclusion. The *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators* supports the development of social justice and inclusion as well as assessment, evaluation, and research. The innovative assessment approach fostered by the consideration and integration of these two competency areas can best be described as inclusive assessment. This approach examines opportunities that exist when engaging in the assessment cycle or spiral to invite equity and inclusion into the assessment conversation. Bridging the gap between principles of social justice and equity to practices of assessment creates opportunities to practice inclusive assessment. Ciji Heiser has worked to develop inclusive assessment practices for each phase of the assessment cycle within the department and division of student affairs.

Methods for integrating inclusive assessment into a culture of assessment include centering marginalized voices, engaging in diverse data collection methods, and employing collaborative approaches to assessment work. These practices invite additional voices to discuss assessment processes such as determining what to measure, which questions to ask, what methods to use, and how to analyze and report findings. One example of this practice that many are familiar with is disaggregating data. Disaggregating data serves as a tool for advancing equity because analyzing data by different populations allows practitioners to identify if programs and services are equitably meeting the needs of all students across the institution. Data disaggregation allows professionals responsible for programmatic efforts to identify if their programs are meeting established outcomes for all students who attend and engage. In addition, examining data provided by different subgroups within the larger population allows voices that are historically marginalized to be brought to the center or forefront.

At UNC, disaggregating data and discussing the findings at a leadership team meeting led to the development of a task force to dig more deeply into

the perspectives of diverse populations. Existing data was leveraged to bring more voices to the table in order to collaboratively determine how to proceed with learning more about the experience of effected populations. Collectively, the task forces decided to host a series of interviews and focus groups and interviews with the student populations of focus. This yielded the collection of a data which told a more rich and vibrant story about the experiences of students of color living on campus. Including diverse methods allowed staff to leverage the collection of data as a tool for equity by creating the space for students to share data around their learning and development in ways that are as rich and complex as their learning process as well as their ways of being and intersecting identities. This approach to methodology created an inclusive space to consider what to measure and how, using multiple modalities for triangulation, and questioning whether a tool measured the intended topic for different groups. These practices compliment the notion that learning is complex and multifaceted and needs methodological approaches that work for students engaged in the learning process who are equally complex and multifaceted.

Centering marginalized voices, diverse data collection methods, and collaborative approaches in assessment work become innovative when leveraged to celebrate equitable programming and redress inequities in our work. Through inclusive assessment practices, traditional *Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning* recommended by the American Association of Higher Education such as:

- assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about;
- assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved;
- assessment is most effective when it reflects and understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time; and,
- assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes are transformed into practices that facilitate the exposure of inequities in programs and services offered and allow such programs and services and the staff who implement them, to better serve all students



Annual Conference Website:
<http://conference2018.naspa.org/>

Program Submission:
<http://conference2018.naspa.org/program>

100th Anniversary of NASPA

The 2018 NASPA Annual Conference marks the 100th gathering of our Association and will begin a year-long centennial celebration! The meeting will allow us to recognize how we started as an organization, celebrate the evolution of the profession, and look forward to the continued transformation of the Association.

The annual conference will provide us an opportunity to consider our roles as student affairs and services administrators, engage in dialogue about creating and promoting inclusive and open learning environments, and build the foundation to guide the next generation of students who are not limited to, or defined by, a singular collegiate experience.

CALL FOR PROGRAMS

Submit a program (or more than one!) and share your fresh and creative ideas with the participants at the 2018 NASPA Annual Conference. Gather your colleagues or use the NASPA Presenter Match to submit programs with multiple perspectives and from various institutions.

Call for Programs Deadline is September 1

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 <https://conference2018.naspa.org/program/call-for-programs>



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.

Important Links

NASPA Homepage

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

NASPA Annual Conference Homepage

<http://conference2018.naspa.org/>

Assessment and Persistence Conference

<http://www.naspa.org/events/2017APC>

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.*



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/NASPAERKC>

Follow us [@NASPA_AERKC](https://twitter.com/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. 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 or to submit your blog post!

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.