



North Carolina Association for Institutional Research

Newsletter

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Brian Rolfe, Editor

President's Corner



Thank you to each of you for the part you played in making the 2005 NCAIR conference held in Charlotte last month a success. The general sessions lead by Dr. Randy Swing, President Robert Vagt, Dr. Hope Williams and Dr. William Fendley, as well as the 12 concurrent sessions and three workshops were exceptional. We have received positive feedback about the quality of the program. Thank you to the attendees who have completed the survey. We will review the many helpful suggestions for next year's conference.

Mark your calendars to attend next year's conference in Boone, North Carolina. The conference will be held March 22-24, 2006 at The Broyhill Inn and Conference Center on the campus of Appalachian State University. Please visit their website for more information: www.broyhillinn.com. The Broyhill will honor the state per diem lodging rate for state employees who request this rate when making their reservation. They will charge \$76/night otherwise.

Congratulations to the newly elected members of the Executive Committee: Kendrick Tatum, Program Chair/President Elect; Wayne Stone, Treasurer; Dana Dalton, Member-at-Large (All Institutions); and Bonnie Stoffel, Member-at-Large (Private Institutions). We also extend our congratulations to Jim Bundy, Dr. Donna Etheridge and Dr. Larry Jones on their up-coming retirement.

Welcome to the 24 new members, who joined us for the conference. For continuing members who were unable to attend the conference, please complete the membership form provided in this issue and send it in. This year's Summer Drive-In will be free for current members. We are delighted to have Dr. Nancy Welchel conducting a survey assessment workshop for the Drive-In. Please see the information provided in this newsletter.

We hope you also find this and the other articles of interest provided in this newsletter helpful and informative. I look forward to serving you as president in the coming year.

Thank you,
Laura

Summer Drive-In July 8th

Using Surveys for Assessment: What are you trying to do? How well are you doing it? How do you use what you learn?

Please plan to join us on July 8th in the historic town of Wake Forest, NC on the campus of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (Wake Forest University's old stomping grounds) for an informative discussion on survey research in assessment.

If you are involved in any part of assessment activities on your campus, this presentation might be of interest to you. Those with little or no survey research experience would benefit most from this presentation, but even those with more experience could pick up some pointers or, better yet, lend their expertise to the discussion.

The presentation will have a lecture format, but is designed to be interactive. Participants are encouraged to bring examples of their own objectives and/or surveys. We will use such examples to provide a real-life perspective as we walk through the various steps in designing and administering a successful survey research project.

Presenter: Dr. Nancy Whelchel



Dr. Nancy Whelchel, Assistant Director for Survey Research in University Planning and Analysis at North Carolina State University, has over 20 years experience doing survey research. Her primary responsibilities at NC State are to administer the University's campus-wide student and baccalaureate alumni surveys, and to prepare reports and presentations on the results. She works extensively with academic and non-academic units across the campus to develop unit-specific surveys designed to collect information geared towards their individual assessment needs, and administers and analyzes those surveys in conjunction with the campus-wide ones.

She routinely provides extensive consulting services to graduate students, faculty, and campus units conducting their own survey research projects. Most recently Dr. Whelchel has taken the lead on designing, implementing, and analyzing data from the NC State Student Campus Climate Survey and a Customer Satisfaction Survey for the Campus Police Department. She is currently leading a team developing a survey to assess NC State faculty well being. This past year she served on the UNC-Office of the President's "survey working group," evaluating the existing system-wide survey process. Dr. Whelchel is a frequent guest lecturer in graduate and undergraduate classes at NC State, and has given numerous professional conference presentations and workshops on survey research design. In addition to her expertise in survey research, she has extensive training and experience in conducting focus groups. She is an active member in the American Association of Public Opinion Research, and currently serves as Conference Operation Chair. She holds a Master's and PhD in Sociology from Rutgers University, and a BA in Sociology and Anthropology from Rollins College.

Presentation Summary:

Who among us has not heard our University constituents cry out “Let’s do a survey!” The goal of this presentation is to help participants evaluate when a survey might actually be a useful strategy in their assessment efforts, and to learn how to design and administer a good quality survey.

The first step in that process is, of course, a brief exploration of what is “assessment.” We will spend some time discussing examples of “objectives,” or the “what are you trying to do?” piece of the assessment loop. The focus of this presentation, however, will be on the next part of the loop - - the “how well are you doing it?” piece. While strategies for answering that question vary, sometimes a survey is an appropriate tool. National surveys are available, and might provide you with the information you need, but a homegrown survey might be called for at times.

This presentation will provide a detailed introduction to the steps involved in developing and administering your own survey - - whether it be telephone, paper and pencil, or web-based. (This is not, however, a presentation on the technical side of survey research, e.g., it will not cover the technical aspects of mounting a web based survey, but will offer examples of software for doing so.) We will also share tips on analyzing data and preparing reports in ways that make the findings most appropriate and useful for the intended audience.

Finally, we will discuss the third and potentially most challenging piece of the assessment loop, using what you learned, in this case, from the survey.

Driving Directions:

From I-95

Pickup US 64 west in Rocky Mount and follow to NC 98 West. Highway 98 west will take you to the Seminary (approximately 30 minutes).

From I-85

Follow exits for Highway 70 and NC 98 east. Continue on NC 98 to Wake Forest. (Approximately 40 minutes). Seminary will be on the left about 1.5 miles after passing under US 1.

From I-40 East (from Greensboro)

From I-40 East, at Exit 283, take I-540. At Exit 16, take Capital Blvd. North. Continue north on Capital Blvd. until you reach the exit for NC 98 and Wake Forest. Turn right (east) onto NC 98, which will take you directly to the Seminary.

From I-40 West (from Wilmington)

From I-40 West, at Exit 301, take I-440 (Outer Beltline). At Exit 11B, bear right onto US 1 North/Capital Blvd. Continue north for about 12 miles until you reach the exit for NC 98 and Wake Forest. Turn right (east) onto Highway 98, which will take you directly to the Seminary.

Hotels in the Area: (Less than three miles away)

Hampton Inn – (919) 554-0222

Sleep Inn – (919) 556-4007

NCAIR has not contacted these hotels to arrange for special rates.

From the Program Chair

Now that the 2005 NCAIR Conference is behind us, it's time to start planning for 2006! I want to take this opportunity to invite all of you to come to the mountains next year and participate in the NCAIR Annual Conference. The conference is planned for March 22-24, 2006 at the Broyhill Inn and Conference Center in Boone, North Carolina. Members of the NCAIR Executive Committee as well as our colleagues at Appalachian State University are already in the early planning stages. However, there is still a lot to be done so, as program chair, I would like to invite you to join the Planning Committee to help make this conference a great one. This is a wonderful way to get involved in NCAIR and to get to know your colleagues. Please contact me if you are interested in serving on the Planning Committee.

As we go through the summer, fall, and winter we will have further information about the conference in the newsletter. If you have any suggestions for the conference please contact me. I look forward to seeing all of you in the mountains.

Kendrick Tatum
2006 Program Chair
Kendrick.tatum@duke.edu
919-684-2724

Congratulations

With pleasure, I write to inform you that Dr. Laura Boyles, currently the Research Analyst for Planning & Institutional Research at Davidson College, has accepted an offer to become the Asst. Dean for Academic Administration for that institution beginning July 1, 2005.

Inquisite Surveys Help Elon University Cut In-House Costs and Improve Student Programs

The Company

Elon University, North Carolina

Elon is a premier private university founded in 1889 by the Christian Church, now the United Church of Christ.

<http://www.elon.edu/>

The Problem

- Training students to manually transpose data
- Consistency
- Accuracy
- Time consuming data collection

The Resolution

- Elon University implemented Inquisite as a cost effective and time management survey tool.
- Elon can now target more individuals and gather accurate, professional information.

The Results

- Decreased turn around time
- Consistency in data
- Centralized database
- Elon's Institutional Research Office has time to focus on important tasks such as special projects, surveys, and assisting

Inquisite at Elon University

Elon University has been an avid Inquisite user since 2000. They use Inquisite to conduct two types of surveys – satisfaction and student participation.

The programs and services offered at Elon University are always being evaluated. "We want to know how well we are providing services to our students. We want feedback about various things such as the food we serve, how well our orientations are presented, and the satisfaction level of our advising", said Robert Springer, Director – Institutional Research. "We also want to know how frequently the students engage in the programs and events that the university offers."

Business Challenge

Prior to using Inquisite, Springer's department used in house paper surveys. During this time, the office was a one person operation. Creating and conducting surveys was extremely time consuming and inefficient. They wanted to find a tool that would reduce the labor intensive paper methodology. However, the paper surveys were still going to be conducted occasionally. "We have a policy that web-based surveys need to be considered first before compiling a paper survey. Inquisite is time and cost efficient. It pays for itself", said Springer.

One of the major challenges was making sure that the paper surveys reached the students through the mail. Often, the students' mailboxes were full and something such as a survey would easily be discarded.

The other challenge was getting the students to return their surveys. Then, once the surveys were returned, the data had to be transposed into a centralized database. The challenge to this was finding individuals that were able to accurately transpose what could be 700 survey responses that were often three and four pages long. Students were often used for this task. As a result, erroneous data was often collected primarily because of human error.

How Inquisite Helped

Elon University recently surveyed 1600 high school seniors and received 1100 responses. If the survey had been done via paper, it would have cost nearly \$2000 to conduct. The cost would include an initiation fee, a return survey fee, and a raw data fee.

"With Inquisite, we are able to analyze our results in a shorter amount of time: ten days versus one or two months. This year our response rate has been anywhere from 41% to 66% with a target audience of 60 to 4000 individuals. The 41% rate is abnormal for us. We believe this is attributed to survey confusion. We conducted a student life survey at the beginning of the month and then we conducted another survey at the end of the month. Our mistake was not differentiating the two surveys. Many students felt that they had already taken the survey and disregarded the second survey", said Springer.

"We learned that we need to clarify our surveys within the subject line and also stagger the source of the survey."

Inquisite Contact Information:

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**North Carolina Association for Institutional Research
Annual Business Meeting
Sheraton Charlotte Airport Hotel, Charlotte, NC
March 11, 2005**

Laura Boyles called the meeting to order.

Minutes

Adam Shick presented the minutes of the 2004 business meeting, and asked for revisions or corrections. There were none, and the membership voted to approve the minutes.

Treasurer's Report

Michael Hadley presented the treasurer's report, and it was accepted as presented. Michael also reported that there were 82 NCAIR members in attendance at the 2005 conference.

Election Results

Rob Springer presented the election results and swore-in the new officers.

Kendrick Tatum, Program Chair/President Elect

Wayne Stone, Treasurer

Dana Dalton, Member-at-Large (All Institutions)

Bonnie Stoffel, Member-at-Large (Private Institutions)

Awards

Rob Springer presented a certificate of appreciation to Jim Bundy of the National Student Clearinghouse.

Laura Boyles presented a plaque to Rob Springer in recognition of his service as Program Chair/President/Past President.

Laura Boyles presented a plaque to Michael Hadley in recognition of his service as Treasurer.

Rob Springer presented the NCAIR Medallion to Laura Boyles, President.

Old Business

1. Travel Grants – Laura Boyles announced that two travel grants were awarded for the 2005 NCAIR conference and she encouraged future participation in the program.
2. Mentoring Program – Rob Springer explained the mentor program and encouraged participation.
3. Communication Update – Brian Rolfe explained NCAIR's two electronic mailing lists, one for job announcements and the other for the newsletter and other business. Members can opt out of either list. Brian also explained that the subject of all messages sent on these lists begins with "NCAIR" (as a means to prevent NCAIR messages being treated as junk mail).
4. "Following year's" conference – Laura explained that the Executive Committee has implemented a conference selection procedure that will allow the location of the following year's conference to be announced at the annual NCAIR conference. She also announced the conference location rotation schedule: east-central-west-joint NCAIR/SCAIR (if applicable).

New Business

1. Laura announced that the 2006 NCAIR conference will be held March 22-24 at the Broyhill Inn in Boone. The Broyhill Inn will honor the state per diem lodging rate for state employees and will charge \$76/night otherwise.
2. Laura announced that the Summer Drive-In will be held July 8, 2005 at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Announcements

Laura thanked vendors, facilitators, presenters and Program Committee.

Laura Boyles adjourned the Annual Business Meeting.

Minutes submitted by Adam Shick, NCAIR Secretary.

NCAIR 2005 Membership Renewal

The membership for members attending the 2005 Conference will be automatically renewed. For those members unable to attend the conference this year, we are providing a separate form to renew your membership. We will miss you at the conference.

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Name: | Institution: |
| Title: | Address: |
| Telephone: | City, State, Zip: |
| Fax: | Email: |

| Fees | Renewal Fee | Amount Due |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| NCAIR Membership Renewal Fee | \$15 | |
| TOTAL DUE | | |

Checks are payable to NCAIR (Tax ID 561-56-2055). Send membership fee to NCAIR Treasurer, Wayne Stone, Academic Planning and Institutional Research, UNC Charlotte, Charlotte NC 28233.

SUMMER DRIVE IN REGISTRATION FORM

The NCAIR 2005 Summer Drive-In will be held at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, NC. July 8th, 2005.

Registration Form:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Institution: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Request Vegetarian Lunch Option: _____

Cost: This event is offered at no charge to current members of NCAIR.

Please mail your completed registration to:

Brian Rolfe
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
Office of Institutional Research
P.O. Box 1889
Wake Forest, NC 27588-1889

Or email the information to:

Brian Rolfe [brolfe@sebts.edu]