Australasian Association for Institutional Research

Electronic Newsletter Editor: Wendy Marchment   editor@aair.org.au

Monthly e-Newsletter – April, 2011

What's in this edition?

THE DATE IS SET!!!

AAIR 2011 Data Warehouse, Load Management, DEEWR SIG Forum

**3-5 August 2011
Canberra**

This forum will be co-hosted by Australian National University and University of Canberra

Website, registration and call for papers available mid-May 2011

For further information contact Fiona Sutherland at ANU, fiona.sutherland@anu.edu.au

---

EDITORIAL OF SORTS

The weather has finally cooled somewhat here in Brisbane. Yet the rain seems to continue sporadically so it will be interesting to see how this year shapes up against the rainfall averages. Certainly, in my garden it's still rather sodden. And the garden is what I look out on as I 'pen' this editorial.

And so to another newsletter …..
Having started out endeavouring to fill 6 pages, this edition managed to easily blow out to 9. Some images helped I guess. Felt I needed to break up the writing and cater for those of us who need some visual cues/stimulation.

Speaking of visual, I was staying at O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat recently and took some walks in the Lamington National Park close by. Highly recommend this area as an add-on side trip if you're coming to the AAIR Forum in November. Fabulous scenery and lots of options for walks. Photo from one of mine follows.

Feedback, comments, suggestions and contributions to the Newsletter are, as always, welcomed.

So, read on and sample the varied mix of items that follows. Enjoy….

Wendy Marchment
Editor
editor@aair.org.au

PLACES TO GO – THINGS TO DO

For more events make sure you check out
http://aair.org.au/pages/events

Showcasing Research Supervision:
Experiences, Reflection, Transformation
7 to 8 April 2011
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
Swinburne Research invites local and international research supervisors to contribute to, and participate in, a conference on research supervision designed to showcase current supervisory practices at Swinburne and beyond.
http://www.supervision2011.com

PUBLIC LECTURE: The computing world is not what you think: a dissenting view
11am, 12 April 2011
QUT, Gardens Point, Brisbane
A public lecture with Ted Nelson - Designer, Generalist, Contrarian presented by CCI and the Faculty of Science & Technology, QUT.
Details here

CEDA Higher Education Luncheon Event
11.00am to 2.00pm, 14 April 2011
Deloitte, Grosvenor Place, 225 George Street Sydney
At this CEDA extended luncheon, experts will debate and discuss the pertinent issues and challenges facing higher education, including: the state of higher education; federal investment in higher education and performance based funding; bridges and pathways for national and international students and building global citizens.
Register here

SA Skills and Workforce Development Forum
9am to 2pm, 14 April 2011
Intercontinental Adelaide, SA
CEDA's 2011 SA skills and workforce development forum, in partnership with DFEEST, will focus on the theme of investment in skills for SA's economic and industry development and the link between skills, innovation and productivity.
Register here

Conversations with Robin Middlehurst –
The Rise of Private Tertiary Education Providers: Challenges and Opportunities
Early May 2011
Canberra, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne
A half-day workshop, 9.30am – 1.00pm
Specific topics to be covered:
- The evolving political and economic context that has led to increased numbers of tertiary education providers entering the UK market
- Challenges and opportunities this poses to the tertiary sector
- Regulatory reform to address growth of private colleges.
Registrations close: 21 April.
Further details here

APQC Knowledge Management Conference
9 to 13 May 2011-04-04
Houston, TX, United States
Training sessions include: Applying Benchmarking Skills, Knowledge Mapping, Building and Sustaining Communities of Practice, Knowledge Management: Strategies and Tactics and Measuring the Impact of KM.
http://www.apqc.org/16th-knowledge-management-conference

The 28th Annual
Qualitative Analysis Conference:
Contemporary Issues in Qualitative Research
12 to 14 May 2011
Brantford, Ontario, Canada
An exploration of methodological, theoretical and substantive issues in qualitative research
http://www.qualitatives.ca/

The 3rd National Research Officers' Forum
24 to 25 May 2011
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
"This year's event will cover the new developments that impact on researchers' work and expectations. It will also once again enable delegates to enhance their knowledge and performance through practical discussion about challenges and advances in research in an evidence-based policy environment." Workshops on 26 May include 'New Tools for Accessing and Analysing Data Effectively' and 'Narrative Research Methods'. Details here

Leaders With A Life Conference
30 to 31 May 2011
Adelaide, SA, Australia
"Leaders With A Life is a 'must' for anyone who dares to, or dreams of, taking the lead!"
Something different perhaps… and I confess I liked the title.
More details here

2011 ACM SIGMOD/PODS Conference:
Athens, Greece
12 to 16 June 2011
Athens, Greece
An international forum for database researchers, practitioners, developers, and users to explore cutting-edge ideas and results, and to exchange techniques, tools, and experiences.
http://www.sigmod2011.org/index.shtml

2nd Annual International Conference on Business Intelligence and Data Warehousing (BIDW 2011)
27 to 28 June 2011
Singapore, Malaysia
http://www.bizintelligenceconf.org/

Australian Quality Forum (AUQF)
29 June to 1 July 2011
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
The forum theme is 'Demonstrating Quality'.
Deadline for abstract submissions has been extended to Friday 8 April 2011
http://www.auqa.edu.au/auqf/2011/

Journal of Vocational Education and Training 9th International Conference
8 to 10 July 2011
Worcester College Oxford, UK
The conference theme is 'Researching Vocational Education Practice and Policies'. Keynote speakers are Margarita Pavlova from Griffith Uni (talking about green skills), Phillip Gonon from the University of Zurich, and Rick Moore from California State University:
http://www.jvetconferences.co.uk/

20th National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference (No Frills)
13 to 15 July 2011
Coffs Harbour, NSW, Australia
The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) invites practitioners and researchers to share their research and knowledge. The conference focuses on strategies, observations and proven practices that can influence policy and practice for an event better training system in Australia. NCVER seeks presentations that rely on sound evidence based research.
To be part of 'No Frills' 2011, submit your abstract by the deadline Friday, 15 April 2011. For abstract requirements and submission details visit here

The Society for College and university Planning Annual, International Conference
23 to 27July 2011
National Harbor, MD, United States
SCUP's Annual, International Conference & Idea Marketplace is higher education's premier conference to focus on best practices in integrated planning. Activities throughout the conference will inform, challenge, and give you take-away knowledge you can immediately apply on your own campus. Early-Bird Registration deadline is May 6
http://www.scup.org/page/annualconf/46

Australasian Evaluation Society 2011 International Conference
29 August to 2 September 2011
Sydney, Australia
Theme: Evaluation and Influence
Evaluation claims to influence public policy, professional practice and the management of organisations. What is the nature and extent of this influence? How can evaluations be made more influential? And conversely, in a rapidly changing world, what are the main influences on evaluation? To what extent is evaluation responding by taking on new approaches and technologies?
http://www.aes2011.com.au/

2011 AAIR Annual Forum
9-11 November, 2011
Sea World Resort,
Gold Coast, Queensland

On behalf of the AAIR Forum Organising Committee, I'd like to extend a warm invitation to you to participate in the 21st annual AAIR forum, where we'll "Let the Sunshine in". The keynote speakers will engage you and challenge your perceptions about what is and what will be. Whether you're a Forum First Timer, or an an hand, I urge you to attend the Forum and meet your colleagues across the sector. And remember, how many conferences come complete with a Dolphin show?

The 2011 forum is being supported by staff from institutions across Queensland and Northern New South Wales, and is made possible with the generous support of our Sponsors. The Sea World Resort and the Gold Coast provide a magnificent setting for us to meet, to network and to "let the sunshine in" on our work as this dynamic sector continues to grow, react and develop.

I look forward to seeing you in the sunshine, on the Gold Coast in 2011

Jeff Holmes
Chair, AAIR 2011 Forum Organising Committee

Call for Abstracts open: 27 April 2011
Registrations open: 27 April 2011

General information about the forum, including registration and venue/accommodation details can be found here:
http://leishman-associates.com.au/AAIR2011/

Some images from the Gold Coast……..

Surfers morn, Image http://www.goldcoastinfo.net

Main beach, Image courtesy of Gold Coast Tourism

Sea World dolphins, Image courtesy of Gold Coast Tourism

NEWSLETTER NOTES

1. 2011 Strategic roadmap for Australian research infrastructure: discussion paper

The Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) is developing a 2011 Strategic Roadmap for Australian Research Infrastructure (2011 Roadmap), which will articulate Australia's national research infrastructure priority areas (Capability areas). Responses to the Discussion Paper should be sent to Roadmap2011@innovation.gov.au by COB Wednesday, 4 May 2011.
Further details here

2. Excellence in Research - where is it?

An interesting article from Prof Alan Pettigrew including various analyses of the ERA data. On the LH Martin site here

3. Data.gov.au

This website is where you can find, access and reuse public datasets from the Australian Government and state and territory governments. Under the category 'Education', DEEWR Higher Education Enrolments and Completions files are there. Interesting that one of the most downloaded datasets so far is the National Public Toilet Map. Just shows what's really important data!!
http://data.gov.au/

4. Can poor measurement lead to poor policy?

NCVER researchers have been looking at whether the Australian Bureau of Statistics' widely-used Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) stands up as a measure of socio-economic status. After comparing it with data from the Longitudinal Surveys of Austalian Youth, they find the answer is yes – and no.
http://www.ncver.edu.au/newsevents/insight/issue41/22242.html
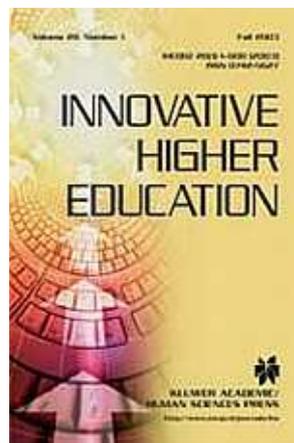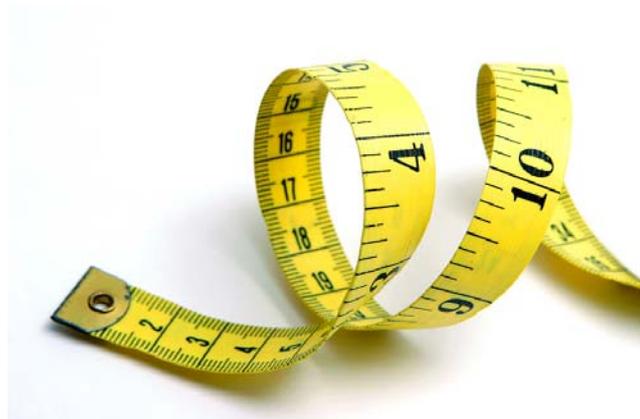
5. Innovative Higher Education Journal

Volume 36, number 2, of Innovative Higher Education is now available in print and in the online version.
http://www.springerlink.com/content/0742-5627

6. The Pursuit of Increased Learning: Coalescing Assessment Strategies at a Large Research University

This is the latest IR Applications paper from AIR. Assessment drives significant change in higher education. Colleges and universities are being asked to publish expected learning outcomes for each of their programs; provide evidence that the expected learning outcomes are realized by students; and demonstrate how such data collection and analyses lead to continuous improvement of student learning, the curriculum, and the university. This is a significant challenge, especially for large schools with many students.
This paper presents a working yet evolving model of an institutional assessment and analysis plan; obstacles and challenges associated with implementing the plan; innovative strategies—some technological—employed to address the obstacles and challenges; a college-wide application of a systems approach to assessment; and lessons learned and future strategies. Institutional, college-wide, discipline-specific, and individual faculty perspectives to a systems approach of bridging assessment, learning outcomes, and accreditation are presented. The importance of student involvement throughout the process is highlighted.
http://www.airweb.org/images/irapps30.pdf

7. World Reputation Rankings

Rankings…just can't get away from them. The Times Higher Education magazine has listed 200 top universities based on how they are regarded by a panel of international academics. Rankings here. BBC article here

8. Peer review in academic promotion and publishing: Its meaning, locus, and future

This report from the Centre for Studies in Higher Education at the University of California, recommends creating a wider array of institutionally acceptable and cost-effective alternatives to peer reviewing and publishing scholarly work to relieve the burdens currently stressing the peer-review system.
http://escholarship.org/uc/item/1xv148c8

9. Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) Board confirm new management appointments

Details here
http://www.tec.govt.nz/

Thanks to Gavin Moodie for the following two items:

10. Marking to the curve

Many AAIRies will have read the newspaper reports of the study by UNSW economist Gigi Foster which found that international students in at least two Australian university business schools were awarded lower marks than other students and that domestic students in tutorials which big numbers of international students got lower marks than domestic students in tutorials without big numbers of international students. You can judge for yourself the various claims about the rigour of Foster's study and the validity of its interpretation by reading her paper: Foster, Gigi, The impact of international and NESB students on measured learning and standards in Australian higher education (February 7, 2011). UNSW Australian School of Business research paper number 2011 ECON 01. Available at SSRN:
http://ssrn.com/abstract=1756829

11. New Australian qualifications framework

The new Australian qualifications framework to be implemented from 1 July 2011 has most implications for academic administrators. However, AAIRies will presumably at some stage to be asked to report enrolments by the new framework which includes a qualification type masters degree (extended) added to the familiar masters degree (coursework) and masters degree (research). AAIRies may also want to check the description of the doctoral degree to determine whether their institution's doctorates with coursework are within the new framework. The framework is on the Australian Qualifications Framework Council's home page
http://www.aqf.edu.au/
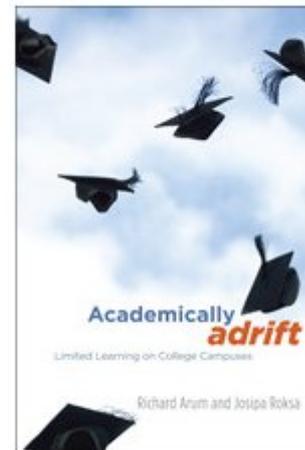
12. How Did Students Become Academically Adrift?

If the purpose of a college education is for students to learn, academe is failing, according to a new book 'Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses'. The statistics quoted relate to students studying less hours per week than their counterparts of earlier years. Many students regard "social learning" as more important than academic learning.
Articles here and here
This reminds me of a book I'm currently reading, 'The Winter of Our Disconnect' by Susan Maushart. Well worth a read, especially if you have teenagers.

13. Australian social trends, March 2011

The ABS has released the quarterly Australian Social Trends. While overall our life expectancy continues to climb and our educational attainment increases, gaps remain between the health and education outcomes of Australians living in cities and those living elsewhere. One of the articles is on Year 12 attainment.
All available here

14. The social work and human services workforce

ALTC Report from a national study of education, training and workforce needs.
Recommendations include that DEEWR identify accredited social work and human services courses as a national education priority (similar to education and nursing).
The full report can be downloaded here

Thanks to Rob Sheehan for the following three items:

### 15. 'Learning while working: Success stories on workplace learning in Europe'

A recent release from the EU's European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). It offers case studies on various aspects of workplace learning, and a bit of an insight into policy diversity in Europe's VET: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3060_en.pdf

16. 'Building innovation capacity: the role of human capital formation in enterprises – a review of the literature'.

This is a handy report from NCVER that gathers up the evidence for the link between innovation and training:
http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2341.html

17. Stuff Academics Like

And a delightfully mischievous website – Stuff Academics Like. Shake in your boots, AAiries – one day some one will launch a website called 'Data Crunchers and the Well-Examined Life'.
http://stuffacademicslike.org/

Pi Day! 3.1415926
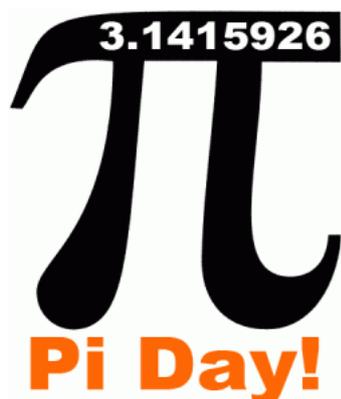
18. The infinite appeal of pi

You may have missed it but 14 March was International Pi Day. Professor Jon Borwein - Australia's very own 'Dr Pi' - argues why we should care here.

19. The Best Map of 2010

In the annual Malofiej awards, for top graphics in journalism, the best map of 2010 went to National Geographic for the World of Rivers. Every river system in the world was mapped and scaled by annual discharge. If you click on 'View river details, you'll get even more information.
http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2010/04/water/water-animation

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

For more opportunities make sure you check out
http://www.aair.org.au/pages/training-development

Business Intelligence in HE and VET: Using the Data
20 April 2011
Melbourne, William Angliss Institute of TAFE
This half a day workshop will be presented by experienced professionals Melissa Banks and Paresh Kevat. It aims to acquaint participants with the multitude of data and information sources relevant to the international student industry for undertaking analysis and interpretation of industry and sector-specific data to facilitate understanding of market trends and future demand patterns in the business of international education, as well as the outcomes and impacts of international education. Participants will be exposed to examples and techniques in data analysis that will enable them to develop their analysis and evaluation skills to improve their decision making.
Registration closes on 13 April,
http://www.ieaa.org.au/Events/ShowEvent_IEAA.asp?id=261&page=1

2011 AIR Foundations I Institute
12 – 16 July 2011
Atlanta, Georgia, United States
Foundations I Institute: The Practice of Institutional Research is designed for new professionals in the field of institutional research. The Institute provides a broad overview of IR along with hands-on practice of core IR skills. Space is limited to 130 participants.
http://www.airweb.org/?page=2183

ESMU-EAIE Benchmarking Workshop
13 September 2011
Copenhagen
This one-day workshop will familiarise participants with the concepts and practices of collaborative benchmarking in higher education and its value in assessing the success of your international strategy with a view to increasing performance.
The workshop is open to 30 participants who are directly involved in internationalisation processes at their institution.
It is also the "first step" to an opportunity for universities to assess whether they would like to become involved in a one-year benchmarking exercise on internationalisation which EAIE and ESMU will start in January 2012 for a group of 15 universities.
http://www.education-benchmarking.org/

MATTERS RAISED WITH DEEWR
Load Planning Software

At AAIR's 2010 Annual Forum, members raised the idea that DEEWR could assist the sector by providing a general load planning software tool for use by Universities.

Members not involved in Load Planning and Forecasting, may not be aware, but in March DEEWR asked Universities to provide load estimates for each year to 2014. No doubt each university used its available resources to construct an estimate that could be provided by such a software tool.

The request for such a tools, was driven by the desire to promote efficiencies in the sector and avoid duplication, given that in the absence of any general software, each University was developing its own models and systems.

In contacting DEEWR, they recommended AAIR work through Universities Australia to establish that a broad interest existed and that Universities Australia was the appropriate group to consider this matter.

Access to Key Data

The second matter raised was in relation to the common issues within Universities in replicating the new interim Low SES Indicator.

Members not familiar with this issue may not realize that Universities are unable to replicate the data underlying the interim SES Indicator due to access issues to Census Collection data level data and Centrelink data.

DEEWR advice was that it would "publish the proportion of low SES students in each State/Territory for benchmarking purposes" and with respect to Centrelink data "will provide each university with an annual count of their students receiving selected Centrelink payments in 2011."

DEEWR also advised that a "sector wide forum to discuss the development of the new University Experience Survey will be held in March/April 2011".

From the general perspective of AAIR, transparency and accessibility to data are paramount in not just replicating published information from DEEWR, but providing insights into the achievement of the Government's participation targets. The current lack of transparency is handicapping the quality of strategies to seek to realize the Government's participation target.

It would be hoped that the final SES Measure, is fully transparent and can be reproduced by Institutional Researchers across the sector.

NatBes

A number of members as well as other users, have queried when the 2009 data will be available to NatBes, the National Benchmarking System for Student Collection data.

NatBes was been completed by Edith Cowan University, which received the funding by DEEWR to build the system on behalf of the sector under Workplace Productivity Program funding. As the system is now complete, DEEWR has indicated that it will no longer provide data, upon which the system is dependent.

A number of organizations and universities have approached DEEWR to review its decision.

Contact the AAIR Committee if you have comments in relation to the above article.
Email: info@aair.org.au

POSITIONS VACANT

Also check out the Opportunities page on the AAIR website
http://www.aair.org.au/pages/opportunities

Manager, Institutional Research
Charles Darwin University
An opportunity for a Manager, Institutional Research to work in the Office of Learning, Teaching and Community Engagement (OLTCE). For further details please contact Prof Martin Carroll, PVC OLTCE, by emailing the Executive Officer, janet.sincock@cdu.edu.au or phone 08 89467778.

SHARE YOUR TIPS

Visual Display Tools
Let's add our own to the tips from AIR colleagues as to Visual Display Tools that they use. See here. Interesting that one has gone with video to try and reach academic staff with their reports. "Faculty are very busy, and most don't have time to read our reports.".

Send your tips to editor@aair.org.au

FOR THE PODDIES, VODDIES AND BLOGGIES

1. Flowing Data

FlowingData is Nathan Yau's blog, a visualization and statistics site. Nathan highlights how designers, programmers, and statisticians are putting data to good use.
http://flowingdata.com/

2. The Future of Copyright

T he World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Director General, Dr Francis Gurry, Addresses the Future of Copyright. At a recent WIPO conference Professor Lawrence Lessig called for a WIPO-sponsored 'blue sky commission' to lead reform of copyright, "The most inefficient property system known to man" View it here

3. Simon Marginson on the international student crisis

Australia is the only developed nation that now has falling numbers of international students. Professor Simon Marginson (Higher Education, University of Melbourne) speaks to SlowTV's Nick Feik about the impact this will have on a higher education system that has come to rely heavily on its international student income View it here

4. Overloaded Internet

"The Internet is now cowboy country, out of control." Bill Davidow says international regulations - or some way of making it all smaller is vital. Listen to him here

REACTIONS?

No reactions to the article in the last newsletter. My reaction to no reactions was well,… maybe you all fell in the middle on an odd-numbered likert scale; or maybe you didn't get to page 6 of the newsletter or maybe you're just all too busy and I should just delete this one…???

DISTRACTIONS

What Pi Sounds Like
Just to belatedly celebrate National Pi Day
Hear it here

Should I work for free?
Consult this chart -
http://shouldiworkforfree.com/clean.html

LIGHT RELIEF

Abbot and Costello Maths Problem
Video here

AND JUST REMEMBER…

The two words 'information' and 'communication' are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.
Sydney J. Harris

The greatest value of a picture is when it forces us to notice what we never expected to see.
—John W. Tukey. Exploratory Data Analysis. 1977

AAIR Committee – 2011

President:
Josie Palermo, Lecturer, School of Psychology, Deakin University

Vice President:
Dave Marr, Business Analyst, University of Newcastle

Treasurer:
Jeff Holmes, Manager, Load Forecasting, QUT

Secretary:
Dean Ward, Manager, Strategic Information Services, ECU

General Committee members:
Mark Bazzacco, Director, Planning & Statistics, University of Canberra

Bruce Guthrie – Research Manager, Graduate Careers Australia

Don Johnston – Institutional Research Officer, Southern Cross University

Sally Nimon, Deputy Director: Reporting & Analytics, University of Canberra

Kathie Rabel, Manager, Institutional Analysis, Victoria University of Wellington

---

Deadline for submissions to the May AAIR e-Newsletter is Saturday 30 April 2011. Send items to editor@aair.org.au

If you're about to change your contact details and still want to receive the Newsletter, please advise editor@aair.org.au

To subscribe or unsubscribe email editor@aair.org.au