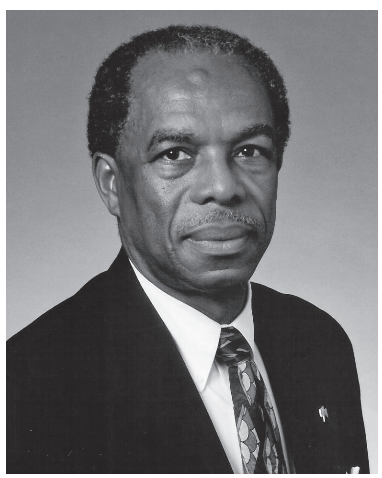
The Association for Institutional Research:

The First 50 Years

By:
Gary Rice
Project Coordinator

Mary Ann Coughlin, Co-Editor
Richard Howard, Co-Editor



Featured on book cover:

Dr. John E. Stecklein	George Beatty, Jr.	Dr. Laura E. Saunders
AIR President, 1965 – 1966 (Deceased)	AIR President, 1980 – 1981	AIR President, 1987 – 1988

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FOREWORD

It is with pleasure and a sense of accomplishment that we present *The Association for Institutional Research: The First 50 Years* to the Association for Institutional Research. In this volume, we present the outcomes of two years of effort in a project that has taught us a great deal about the people and circumstances that built the foundation of who we are today, as a professional association and as a profession. Many of our institutional research colleagues provided significant assistance, and we are indebted to them. This project has given us an opportunity to look into our past, giving us a greater understanding of where we began and broader insights about where we might be tomorrow. We are grateful for the opportunity to make this contribution to the Association for Institutional Research and the profession of institutional research.

Gary Rice, Project Director

Mary Ann Coughlin

Richard "Rich" Howard

Margaret "Peggye" Cohen

Meihua Zhai

William "Bill" Lasher

Dawn Geronimo Terkla

Fred Lillibridge

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Gary Rice
University of Alaska Anchorage

Project Overview

This volume reflects the work of a number of institutional research (IR) professionals and Association of Institutional Research (AIR or Association) members who accepted the challenge to document the history of the Association. The genesis of the project occurred in the spring of 2009, when AIR Executive Director Randy Swing agreed to provide support by providing access to the Association's electronic records. Initially, the project had several goals. The first was to construct and electronically document AIR's history and evolution through governance, policies, and member participation/contributions over the past 50 years. A second goal was to document the evolution of the profession of institutional research within the context of higher education trends and benchmarks. A third goal was to document the establishment and history of the Association for Institutional Research from the perspective of its leaders during its first 50 years. A fourth goal was to incorporate individual members' recollections and perceptions of the Association's impact on them professionally and personally. Finally, our intent was to provide the Association with a flexible framework to electronically record and track its future.

Five questions were developed by the project team to guide the work of the project:

- What changes have occurred in AIR member and institutional composition trends over the past 50 years?
- What has been the scope of members' active involvement with AIR over the years?
- What has been the relationship between changes in both higher education and the IR profession as compared to changes in the AIR organization over the years?
- How do the duties, training, information production support tools, requirements, and expectations placed on the IR offices of today compare with those of the past?

- What does the immediate future appear to hold for the IR profession and AIR's role to support its members?

As detailed below, the initial notion was to document the history of the Association by digitizing the records of the Association and building a database that could be analyzed from several different perspectives to create AIR's story over the past 50 years. The second priority was to document the creation and evolution of the profession of institutional research within the context of higher education (primarily in North America) through an extensive literature review. Third, we tracked the Association's history from its beginnings in 1965 to 2010 through the perspectives and memories of AIR's past leaders. Fourth, all active members were surveyed about their involvement in the Association and asked about the impact that affiliation with the Association has had on their careers. Responses to this survey were not adequate to provide reliable information and, as such, the results of this effort are not presented in this volume. This monograph and the databases that have been created document the accomplishment of the final goal of creating a methodology and template for capturing Association data in the future.

Project Methodology

The origins of this project were the results of conversations initiated by Gary Rice with different members of the Association. From these conversations, it was evident that widespread support existed for documenting the history of the Association, and Randy Swing was approached about the AIR Central Office's support of the project. Randy indicated that he was conceptually supportive of the project and that Gary could have access to the Association's historical databases. At this point, a task force was formed to design and operationalize the history project. Selection of task force members was based on several criteria that included (a) an active history with the Association; (b) knowledge of higher education and its history, data management, and analysis skills; and, (c) a willingness to commit to a long-term project.

On a personal level, Gary considered this opportunity to work on a significant project for the Association a way to reinvest in an organization from which he had gained so much and to which he had given so much throughout his career. When called, all prospective members accepted Gary's invitation to serve, and the task force was formed. Task force members agreed to contribute to multiple activities, and most accepted leadership responsibilities for specific facets of the project. Once the project got underway, additional people were recruited to support specific activities. Below, the task force members are listed followed by the specific activities and responsibilities they assumed.

Task Force Members and Affiliation

The task force members:

Gary Rice: Project Director, University of Alaska Anchorage
Mary Ann Coughlin, Springfield College
Margaret Peggye Cohen, George Washington University, Emeritus
Richard Howard, Consultant
Fred Lillibridge, Dona Ana Community College
William Lasher, University of Texas Austin, Emeritus
Dawn Geronimo Terkla, Tufts University
Meihua Zhai, National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration

Initial Assignments

The following list documents the initial assignments of the task force members.

Higher Education/Institutional Research History and Evolution
Assignment Leader: Bill Lasher
Primary Support: Rich Howard, Donald Reichard

AIR History-Governance, Policies, Services—Past Presidents' Perspectives
Assignment Leader: Richard Howard
Primary Support: Bill Lasher, Don Reichard, Dawn Geronimo Terkla, Fred Lillibridge, and Mary Sapp

Member Recollections/Perceptions of AIR Impact
Assignment Leader: Dawn Geronimo Terkla
Primary Support: Margaret Peggye Cohen, Meihua Zhai

AIR History–Member Involvement Perspective
Assignment Leader: Gary Rice
Primary Support: Mary Ann Coughlin

Archive Database, Digitizing Hard Copy, and Future Electronic Tracking
Assignment Leader: Mary Ann Coughlin
Primary Support: Gary Rice, Fred Lillibridge

What Have We Done?

Finding the Data

Acting as a "central clearinghouse," Gary Rice contacted all members of AIR asking for their assistance in collecting information about the Association. Members were asked to search their files for documents (paper or electronic) for Association documents and publications and, if willing, to send them to Gary. This call resulted in a flood of documents being sent to the "clearinghouse" and constituted the foundational data to be used for tracking member participation and contributions to the Association over time. These data sources included membership directories, annual reports, AIR fact books, Forum program books and proceedings, various AIR publications, AIR Business Meeting minutes, member surveys, and write-ups of personal interviews.

The volume of hard copy and electronic data sources that were uncovered exceeded expectation and was a direct result of significant help from a number of individuals. These individuals included Cliff Adelman, Mary Sapp, Dorothy Cheagle, Bernie Sheehan, Gail Fishman, Alan Sturtz, Norm Gravelle, Dawn Geronimo Terkla, Erin Maggard, Mike Valiga, Gerry McLaughlin, Meihua Zhai, Gary Rice, and Nicole Zimmerer. In each case, these members indicated that their contributions should be considered donations to the Association's archives. This list does not include a number of individuals who were interviewed or responded to the project survey. Their contributions are equally significant. To all who contributed their knowledge, source data, and "sweat equity," we and AIR owe a large debt of gratitude. Their contributions, literally, were essential in documenting and as such "saving" the Association's history.

As might be expected, over time, the documents reflected the work of different individuals and priorities, enhanced software capabilities, and the needs of the Executive Committee. Hard-copy data formats changed from year to year. Often in viewing early membership directories, the same individual's name was formatted differently with varying title abbreviations. In the early years, no common individual AIR member number was assigned. Another complication found in the membership directory was the manner in which institutional affiliation was abbreviated, as the structure for abbreviations was often inconsistent from year to year. Forum programs were another major source of data that presented their own set of complications. Individuals listed in the published Forum programs as presenters may or may not have been AIR members or, in some cases, individuals may not even have attended the Forum because they simply may have contributed to the paper.

As most of the data sources were in hard copy form, the first major step was to digitize the data, and this process was a huge manual effort. The best illustration of this effort was documenting Forum participation. To capture each member's active involvement in the

Forum as a presenter, moderator, plenary speaker, Special Interest Group (SIG) organizer, poster presenter, etc., it was necessary for one person to manually code the data from each of the 50 Forum programs into a database.

Another major hurdle was encountered when attempting to digitize the membership directories over the years. Building electronic databases from the hard-copy directories proved challenging, and in several instances, earlier directories were so illegible they had to be manually keyed. Once scanned, the resulting database had to be converted into a format that would lend itself to analysis. In addition, each record had to be reviewed to ensure that all information was present, institutional and demographic codes were updated to be consistent, and a permanent ID was assigned to those members who did not have one. This process proved so time-consuming that, to date, only four of the directories scanned have been converted into clean useable databases.

What Have We Found to Date?

In the remaining chapters of this volume, we answer this question from several different perspectives.

Chapter 2: The History of Institutional Research and Its Role in American Higher Education Over the Past 50 Years

In this chapter, significant benchmarks in the history of higher education (primarily U.S. higher education) and the parallel growth of IR as a profession are presented and discussed. This then serves as a context for examining the growth and evolution of AIR. The information was obtained from Bill Lasher's own extensive knowledge of this area combined with an extensive literature review he and Don Reichard developed.

Chapter 3: AIR History-Governance, Policies, and Services—Perspectives of Past Presidents

In this chapter, the growth and evolution of AIR from 1965–2010 is examined from the perspective of the Association's past presidents. Each supporting member of Rich Howard's task group is a past president of AIR. With the exception of Rich Howard, each of these AIR leaders interviewed past presidents from the decade in which they served as president (Rich Howard, 1965–79; Don Reichard, 1980–89; Mary Sapp, 1990–99; Dawn Terkla, 2000–08; and Fred Lillibridge, 2008–10). While a common outline was used to help structure the interviews, the reports of these interviews are presented as written by each of the interviewers. As such, the components of this chapter reflect not only the activities and accomplishments of the Association during the various time periods, but also the unique context in which the issues, challenges, and opportunities of that time period were addressed.

Chapter 4: AIR History: The First 50 Years of Data

Mary Ann Coughlin and Norm Gravelle were able to establish three current annual census electronic files (1999–2000, 2007–08, and 2008–09) that contained data of sufficient completeness and accuracy to construct a framework for the type of information possible for future tracking. All other trend data presented in this chapter came from four published AIR Fact Books, which had been officially accepted by AIR as accurate at the time of publication.

The member involvement perspective originally envisioned was not feasible because of the huge manual effort required to build the databases. However, several tables are presented that illustrate Forum participation from data that were derived from the Forum Programs. These data provide a glimpse of the potential information that can be created as these data and resources are cleaned and refined.

Chapter 5: AIR History and Evolution—First 50 Years: A Reflection and Summary

Given all this activity, the closing chapter attempts to pull together what we have learned and to reflect on AIR's history. The original project's intent was to document AIR's history from its data and to explore its growth and development over the past 50 years. This final chapter is structured within the stages of development of institutional research as outlined by Marvin Peterson in his presentation to NEAIR in 2008.

Timeline

To provide additional context for the rest of this volume, a timeline was created to highlight important events and benchmarks in the Association's history. Figure 1.1 presents the reader with a summary overview of the Association's growth during the first 50 years of its existence. During the creation of this timeline, there were several instances in which memories about the specifics of who or what or when were different among those that were there. When available, we have documented the specifics; however, in advance, if we have inadvertently "recreated history," we apologize.

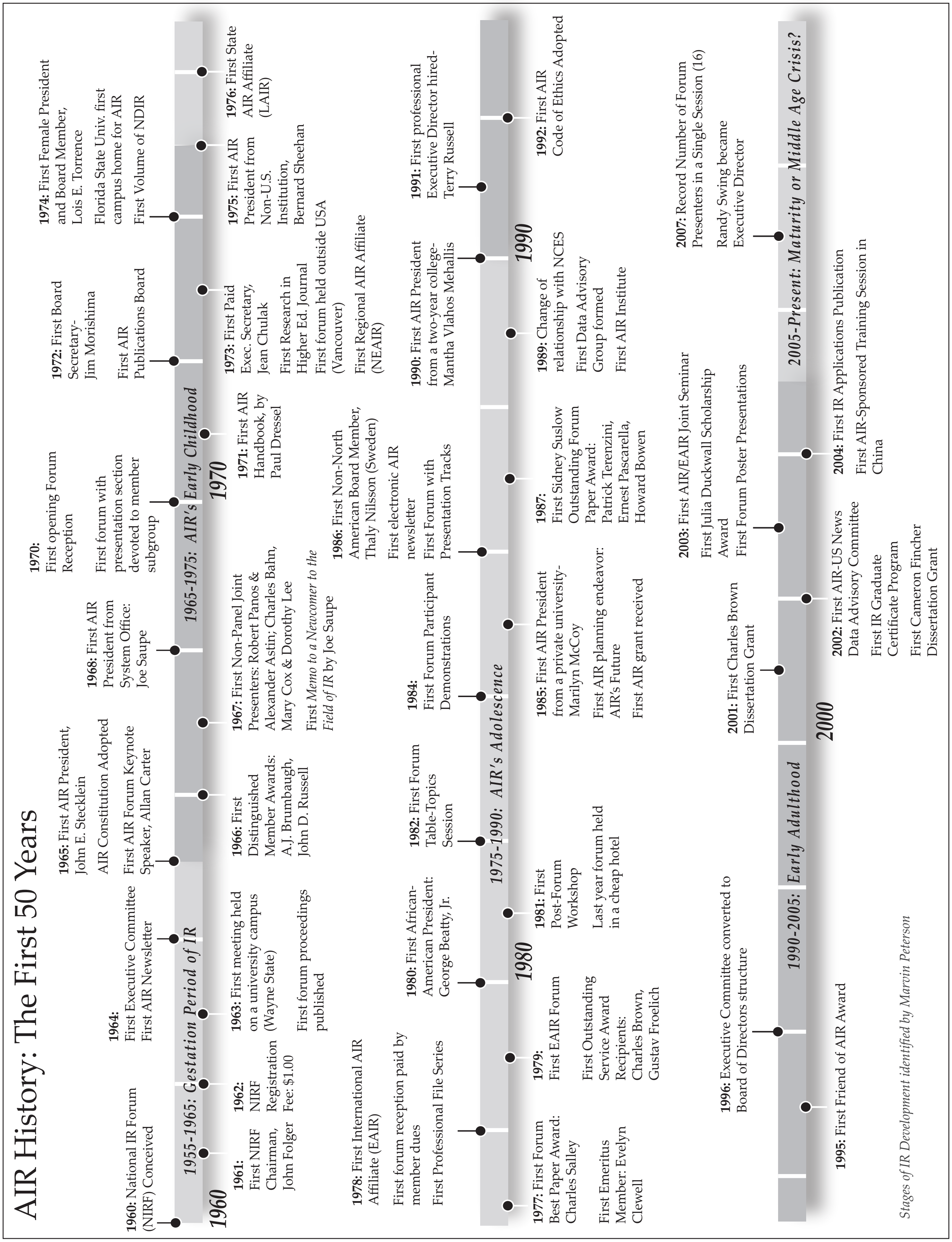

Figure 1.1. AIR History: The First 50 Years Timeline

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORY OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND ITS ROLE IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS

William F. Lasher

University of Texas – Austin

In 1960, a small group of people—mostly from Big Ten universities—were invited to attend a "seminar on institutional research" prior to the annual conference of the American Association of Higher Education in Chicago. This gathering of 15–20 individuals became one of the precursors of another seminar, the National Institutional Research Forum (NIRF), held the next year. It also helped set into motion the identification, organization, and evolution of an important professional area in higher education administration (Doi, 1979). This area has been called by many names, but to most, it is known as institutional research (IR).

But that small gathering in 1960 represented only one small point in the history of institutional research. In this chapter, I will examine the events that led up to that gathering. More important, I will also examine the evolution of institutional research over the last 50 years—its history and its role in higher education. We will look at this thing we call *institutional research*—how it has changed since that gathering in 1960, and how it has remained the same.

First a personal note: This is certainly not the first attempt to chronicle the history of institutional research and its place in higher education. I am indebted to many who have undertaken previous reviews. As will become evident in the following pages, however, I have focused on the work of a few who have made what I think are particularly salient observations. This work has benefited immensely from conversations with and insights of Donald Reichard, a long-time colleague and friend. In the spring of 2010, Dr. Reichard and I discovered that we had both been asked, by different groups, to write about the history of institutional research. Rather than plow these fields separately, we decided to work collaboratively. Much of what appears in the next section is the result of that collaboration. Dr. Reichard's work is scheduled to be published in *The Handbook of Institutional Research* (in press) in the spring of 2012.

Origins; Antecedents; Mutations; Early Models: Pre-1955

This chapter is organized according to historical periods. Any timeline is in some respect arbitrary; however, as mentioned in the Introduction to this volume, we are using the timeline developed by Marvin W. Peterson in his presentation at NEAIR in November 2008, with his kind permission. Peterson's timeline has many advantages, the most important of which is that it makes sense, given the evolution of institutional research and its role in higher education over the last 50 years.

The first piece of institutional research in America is generally considered to be a study done by the founders of Yale as they examined the organizational structure of Harvard. This work was dated as 1701, the year of Yale's founding, by W. H. Cowley, a distinguished historian of higher education, in a paper given in 1959 at a workshop sponsored by the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) held at Stanford University. This paper entitled "Two and a Half Centuries of Institutional Research" reveals a great deal about the early days of what we now refer to as institutional research. The Yale study was significant in the history of American higher education, because the governance structure adopted by Yale was different from that of Harvard and William and Mary, the only two American colleges then in existence. Both of those institutions operated with two governing boards. Yale, on the other hand, adopted a single governing board approach. Cowley concluded that the Yale founders made this decision based on advice from the leaders of Harvard and a study of the single governing board structures of Scottish universities and the University of Dublin (Cowley, 1960).

Governance was also the theme of the next examples of institutional research cited by Cowley. Ezra Stiles, who became president of Yale in 1778, carried out three important studies during the 1760s and '70s. The first concerned the governance of Rhode Island College, which later became Brown University; the second occurred as the result of Yale's invitation that Stiles become its new president. Cowley reports that the lawyer/clergyman was not sure at first whether he wanted the job. His personal analysis of Yale's governance structure, a controversy at the time between the Connecticut Legislature and the institution's governing board, and public opinion about Yale convinced him to take the job. Stiles' third study, entitled "Plan of a University," focused on Yale's curriculum and what it should/would become. It was based not only on what was being taught at Yale, but also on curricula at Harvard and what would become Columbia University and the University of Pennsylvania (Cowley, 1960).

Governance and curriculum continued to be centers of attention for the higher education analysts of the day, but in the 1820s at Harvard, there began a set of activities that we would today refer to as *institutional self-study*. A set of committees involving governing board members and faculty was established to study various aspects of the institution's operation following a series of events that included calls for curricular reform by a professor who had studied under the German university model, a particularly nasty case of student unrest, and demands that faculty be allowed membership on the Harvard Corporation—one of the institution's two governing boards. Many changes in governance, academic organization, curriculum, and student discipline resulted (Cowley, 1960).

One "aha" moment that Cowley reminds us of is that there was limited understanding of statistics and data during these early years of American higher education. The American Statistical Association was organized in 1839, and subsequently, the importance of such information became more widely recognized by businesses, governments, and institutions of higher education. Cowley reports that in 1866, Frederick A. P. Barnard, president of Columbia University, published the first statistical study in American higher education. This report—conceptually simple, yet highly useful—analyzed the enrollments of 10 colleges identified as Columbia's competitors. President Barnard published a much larger follow-up report in 1870.

Cowley also mentions that Charles Eliot, President of Harvard from 1869 to 1909, provided another important example of the profound use of data and statistics. President Eliot included large numbers of statistical tables in his annual reports to the Harvard governing boards. He also reported on the various studies that he and his colleagues had completed on the many problems facing the institution. This led Cowley to state that institutional research was a "continuous rather than spasmodic" activity during Eliot's presidency (Cowley, 1960, p. 6). According to Cowley, A. Lawrence Lowell, who succeeded Eliot as president in 1909, did so most probably because of his involvement in institutional research activities, initially those involving the institution's Committee on Improving Instruction. This committee was established to study what we today might refer to as *student engagement* in the college experience. Cowley (1960) argued that the committee's work was "the first factual investigation of instruction methods conducted by an American college or university" (p. 6). It included such information as the average number of hours students spent studying outside class and class size. In the category of "some things never change," the committee reported that students spent less time on their studies than the faculty estimated they should.

William Rainey Harper, the first president of the University of Chicago, was a strong proponent of research, including institutional research. In 1899, in a paper entitled "Waste in Education," he argued that each student should be studied on entry to the university to determine his/her capabilities, tastes, tendencies, weaknesses, and defects in order that a course of study could be devised. Also, at the turn of the 20th century, interest in management efficiency—both in industrial and academic settings—became a subject of interest of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (Cooke, 1910) and such authors as Frederick W. Taylor (1911).

In his dissertation on the emergence of institutional research, William Tetlow (1973) concluded that the period from the founding of Harvard to the early 1900s was a time where what we would today call *institutional research* was carried out by individual higher education leaders. New institutions were built based, in large measure, on the designs and policies of those founded earlier. And, certain presidents utilized information and statistical analysis—even in its most rudimentary form—to solve the institutional problems of the day. One should be clear, however, that while there are many examples of data being collected about the higher education institutions of the time and studies being done on various aspects of their operation, none of these efforts were labeled *institutional research*. That would come later.

The Survey Era

Tetlow (1973) also identified the period 1908–43 as "The Survey Era" in higher education. This resulted from the urging for management efficiency by the Carnegie Foundation that was, at the time, developing its pension plan for higher education faculty (the forerunner of what we know today as Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association-College Retirement Equities Fund—TIAA-CREF). President Henry C. King of Oberlin College is generally credited with initiating the first comprehensive investigation of efficiency at his institution in 1908. But, the minimum standards for staff size and degrees held, library volumes, teaching loads, etc., had been developed by Melvil Dewey (inventor of the Dewey Decimal System) when he was secretary of the New York State Board of Regents in 1892 (Brubacher & Rudy, 1958). In addition to the urging of the Carnegie and other foundations of the time, the appointment of a survey specialist at the then U.S. Bureau of Education served as another factor to boost the survey movement. Over the next several years, extensive surveys of higher education institutions or systems of institutions were carried out at the University of Oregon, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, in the state of Vermont, at institutions affiliated with the Methodist church, and at the University of Wisconsin—although this last survey was generally derided as having shoddy methodology (Tetlow, 1973). In 1937, Walter Crosby Eells reported in the Carnegie Foundation publication, *Surveys of American Higher Education,* that over 500 studies had been completed since King's first effort at Oberlin. Eells also noted the main reasons that surveys had become such a prominent tool in analyzing higher education:

> 1) the development of the scientific spirit in education; 2) the efficiency movement in business and industry; 3) the social survey movement; 4) the growth of higher education; 5) the complexity of higher education; 6) the cost of higher education; 7) the criticisms of higher education; 8) the development of accrediting agencies; 9) the influence of the general educational survey movement; and 10) self-protection. (Eells, 1937, p. 54–68, as reported in Reichard, in press)

Floyd W. Reeves of the University of Chicago was deeply involved in many surveys during the late 1920s and early '30s. Eells (1937) notes that Reeves was involved in a total of 96 surveys during this period, 64 in which he served as the principal investigator.

These surveys involved all types of colleges and universities, and many of them were carried out for the North Central Association, the regional accrediting association responsible primarily for institutions in the Midwest and the institutions associated with the Methodist Episcopal Church. Reeves also led an extraordinary series of studies as part of a comprehensive self-survey of the University of Chicago. Two of Reeves' students were John Dale Russell and A. J. Brumbaugh. As discussed later in this volume, both of these men would become recognized pioneers in the field of institutional research as it became more professionalized.

Eells (1937) quoted Russell concerning the importance of the survey era: "It is my opinion that the survey movement in higher education is something more than a passing fad or fancy, that it has become an essential part of the administration of American colleges and universities..." (p. 352). Russell went on to say that "...centers of interest for study of institutional problems within the institution itself" were beginning to develop (p. 352).

Tetlow (1973) stated, "The genesis of institutional research truly belongs to the survey era: the idea had 'come of age'" (p. 60). And, the notion of what an administrative unit that would engage in such research should look like was even the topic of a doctoral dissertation by Schiller Scroggs completed at Yale University in 1935. Scroggs designed his study "to serve as a concrete aid to college executives interested in setting up within their institutions a system of fact-finding and research as an administrative agency" (p. iii). Scroggs' study was comprehensive in both providing a model for such an operation and also demonstrating the differing opinions on the value of such a unit. Unfortunately, there is little evidence that Dr. Scroggs' work had much impact on the development of institutional research.

But such units did exist, mostly at larger institutions. In fact, Joe Saupe (2005) referred to the 1920s as "the beginning of the institutionalization of the function of institutional research" (p. 4). The University of Illinois established its Bureau of Institutional Research in its College of Education in 1918. At the time, this unit was designed to serve the central administration (Cowley, 1960). Many agree that this was probably the first administrative unit created for the purpose of ongoing institutional research (Brackett, 1983; Cowley, 1960; Saupe, 2005). Ohio State University established a Bureau of Educational Research, also in 1918, but the chief focus of its staff was on surveys of Ohio's schools. In 1928, two divisions that we would label as being engaged in institutional research were added. A section focused on achievement tests was headed by Ralph W. Tyler, and a similar area concentrating on student affairs research was headed by Cowley.

Several such units reported directly to institutional presidents. In 1927, the University of Michigan established a Bureau of University Research. The unit was renamed the Office of Educational Investigations in 1929, and it was moved organizationally to report to the President. Unfortunately, it closed in 1945 based on a decision made by a different president. Also in 1927, Yale's president established its Department of Personnel

Study. According to Cowley, this unit produced significant research on predicting student achievement and on other topics related to the study of students. Similarly, Purdue University's president established a Division of Educational Reference in the late 1920s to "study the instructional activities of the University, to serve as educational adviser to both faculty and administrative officers, and to publish the results of its labors in the form of bulletins" (Cowley, 1960, p. 13).

A different approach was taken at the University of Minnesota; however, the results were important to the history of institutional research. In 1924, a University Committee on Educational Research was created, although according to Stecklein (1960), the genesis of the work of this group occurred in 1922. This committee of university officials and faculty members continued its self-study work until 1948, when it became an advisory committee to an administrative unit called the Bureau of Institutional Research, "...a special research unit maintained by the University for the study of its own educational and administrative problems" (p. 32).

Given the nature of the times, there were most certainly other institutions that established self-study activities and/or administrative units during this period, but the ones mentioned above are discussed most frequently in the literature. As was mentioned previously, much of what we would now call *institutional research* performed during this period was carried out by individual faculty members or small groups that were either interested in a particular topic or perhaps were asked by their president to attempt to find solutions to a particular problem facing their institution. Administrative departments established to pursue such work were generally found only in larger institutions. In fact, James Doi (1979) estimated that there were fewer than 10 offices of institutional research in 1957, but about 50 only two years later. Obviously, institutional research was a concept that was beginning to spark some interest.

Gestation; Advocacy Promotion: Mid-1950s to Mid-1960s

Many have labeled the period of the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s as "The Real Beginning" of institutional research, and there is much to support this claim. As the country planned for the return of the men and women who fought in World War II, Congress passed and the President signed a piece of legislation that became known as the G.I. Bill. This law provided funding for higher education for veterans. In addition, the 1946 Truman Commission on the Purpose of Higher Education emphasized that higher education had become a critical need in the new atomic age in which this country would play a major role. As a result, college and university enrollment growth in the late 1940s and early 1950s was tremendous. In the mid-1950s, the Civil Rights movement was born, and the Russians launched Sputnik. In addition, the federal government began pumping billions of dollars into universities to promote much-needed basic and applied research. As a result, not only did institutions of higher education grow rapidly, they also became increasingly complex as organizations. Consequently, they became more difficult to understand—not only to the public and policy-makers, but also to their very own administrators. One response to this increased complexity was the formation of regional coordinating agencies: the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) was created in 1948; the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) was created in 1953; and the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) was created in 1954. In addition, the National Science Foundation (NSF) was created in 1950.

One early institutional collaboration should also be mentioned. This effort became known as the "California and Western Conference Cost and Statistical Study." Most of the University of California campuses were represented as were five Big Ten institutions (including Indiana University, the State University of Iowa, Michigan State University, the University of Minnesota, and Purdue University), Pennsylvania State University, the University of Washington, Vanderbilt University, and Wabash College. Each institution provided large amounts of operating data for the 1954–55 academic year, and this analysis produced many important conclusions concerning instructional costs (Hicks & Kidner, 1955; Saupe, 2005).

Doi (1979) also argues that the spread of statewide coordination had a material effect on the birth and growth of institutional research. He gives special mention to the work of John Dale Russell and its impact on the work of others.

> The linkages between institutional research offices and statewide coordination go back to the mid-1950s. John Dale Russell, clearly a pioneer in statewide coordination, was also a pioneer in developing higher education management statistics. He was the first chief executive of a statewide board to base coordinating policy on systematic data collection and analysis. The studies he produced in New Mexico came to serve as models for similar studies by other statewide boards and for institutional research itself. Among them were analyses of income and expenditure; studies of class size, teaching loads, and instructional salary costs per student credit hour (SCH); and space utilization studies. Later, as the first director of institutional research for New York University, Russell replicated many of the same studies with minor modification... I replicated the New Mexico studies in Colorado. By 1960, it was possible to obtain copies of similar studies in a dozen states. (p. 38)

Foundations, interstate commissions, accrediting agencies, federal government agencies, and state policy-makers were all pressuring higher education leaders to understand their institutions better, to have better institutional data, and to use it in managing their institutions. This led to a series of important workshops on a range of topics related to institutional self-study and institutional research. In 1956, the Carnegie Corporation provided the American Council on Education (ACE) a grant of $375,000 to help provide better data on higher education (Tetlow, 1973). With part of this grant, ACE established an Office of Statistical Information and Research (OSIR) in 1957. Elmer D. West served as director of this effort, and at two conferences sponsored by OSIR that year, he urged institutional presidents to appoint individuals to engage in systematic institutional research. According to Tetlow, West's urgings and the conferences themselves helped popularize the term *institutional research* (1973). In response to urgings by conference attendees for a clearinghouse for studies of internal institutional issues, ACE began publishing a newsletter entitled, *Report on Current Institutional Research,* in 1958. Available free of charge to anyone who requested it, the newsletter was published until 1961.

Although the newsletter was short-lived, it spurred several surveys of institutional research activities: SREB-sponsored a survey of IR at institutions in the Southern states in 1958; WICHE sponsored a similar survey in Western states, also in 1958; W. Hugh Stickler of Florida State University published a survey of IR in state universities and land grant colleges in 1959; B. Lamar Johnson surveyed IR in community colleges in 13 western states in 1961; and NEBHE sponsored a survey of IR in New England institutions in the same year. The findings from these studies were similar; institutional research and self-study activities were taking place at many institutions, but relatively few had actually established an IR office (Doi, 1979).

ACE's Office of Statistical Information and Research was also instrumental in encouraging several workshops to promote institutional self-study and institutional research. Again, the major sponsors of these workshops were the regional compacts: WICHE, SREB, and NEBHE. In 1959, WICHE sponsored a summer workshop at Stanford University titled, "College Self-Study: Lectures on Institutional Research" (Axt & Sprague, 1960). Several chroniclers of the history of institutional research have pointed out that at the time of this conference, the term *institutional research* was not as well-known among higher education officials as was the notion of *self-study* (Saupe, 2005; Tetlow, 1973). But, the relationship between the terms does indicate the importance of accrediting bodies—with their emphasis on institutional self-study—on the early development of institutional research. Cowley's 1960 paper referenced earlier was the first lecture at the 1959 WICHE summer conference. The remaining lecturers reflected the "nuts and bolts" approach prevalent at the time as those involved tried to determine what institutional research actually was. The topics included "student studies; faculty studies; budgetary and program analysis; and space and campus planning" (Tetlow, 1973, p. 74).

Later in 1959, ACE, WICHE, NEBHE, and SREB co-sponsored a workshop at Purdue University where the topic was measuring faculty load. According to Tetlow (1973), attendance at the workshop was limited to "fifty administrators, professors, and 'technicians' (IR practitioners)" (p. 72). In 1960, SREB sponsored an institutional research workshop primarily intended for "registrars, admissions officers, budget officers, guidance personnel, and other faculty or administrative personnel interested in institutional study" (p. 74). The case for institutional research was being made.

ACE helped on another front as well. The justification for institutional research was presented convincingly in a monograph ACE published in 1960. This report, titled *Research Designed to Improve Institutions of Higher Learning,* was authored by A. J. Brumbaugh. Although the term *institutional research* did not appear in the report's title, Brumbaugh made the argument on its behalf early in the document.

> The key to effective administration is the ability of the president and those who work with him to ask the right questions and then find the right answers. But the right answers to the right questions, whether they are specific in relation to a given institution or whether they are more comprehensive, must take into account all the relevant, factual data—the kind of data that only institutional research can provide. (p. 2)

Brumbaugh continued to make the case throughout the report in sections titled, The Need for Institutional Research, Areas of Institutional Research, The Conduct of Institutional Research, and The Effects of Institutional Research. He also provided examples of how institutional research could be organized in an institution (as cited in Reichard, in press).

Another early inter-institutional collaboration was established about this time, and this one had a direct bearing on institutional research. Institutional researchers from Big Ten universities and the University of Chicago formed The Institutional Research Council of Eleven, in 1960, and members of this group met periodically to exchange information and materials. A number of their early inter-institutional studies dealt with fall enrollments, interstate migration of students, courses listed in institutional catalogs compared with those taught, and ratios of clerical staff per faculty members (Saupe, 2005). Many of these individuals would later play important roles in the drive for an IR professional organization.

And, the workshops promoting institutional research continued. In the next several years, there were many more. As examples, nine more workshops were sponsored by SREB on the basic nature of institutional research and various subtopics such as student studies and college admissions. Paul Dressel of Michigan State University led one on institutional research in liberal arts colleges in 1960. B. Lamar Johnson led one on institutional research in junior colleges in 1961. And in 1962, NEBHE launched a four-year series on institutional research for New England institutions (Doi, 1979). WICHE followed up after its 1959 workshop with seven others during the 1960s. The topics of these meetings are indicative of the interests of IR practitioners, and those learning about IR during that time. In 1960, the topic was Research on College Students; in 1961, Studies of College Faculty; in 1962, The Study of Campus Cultures; in 1963, The Study of Academic Administration; in 1964, Long-Range Planning in Higher Education; in 1965, Order and Freedom on the Campus; and in 1966, Campus and Capitol (Saupe, 2005). There were still other conferences sponsored by the College Board and the U.S. Office of Education.

As a result of these promotional activities, people wanted to find out what institutional research was, and if they were involved in such activities, they wanted to share ideas and experiences concerning methodologies, problems, and issues with other practitioners.

From NIRF to AIR

During the early 1960s, college and university leaders were "getting the message." Faculty members and administrators in various areas were beginning to engage in institutional research activities, and IR offices (under various names) were being established. The need to commiserate with colleagues and share ideas also developed. The gathering before the 1960 meeting of the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) in Chicago was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, but there were other discussions as well. In fact, there is no consensus in the literature as to how the first "national" meetings on institutional research came about. Tetlow (1973) and Doi (1979) state that the seminar that preceded the AAHE meeting in the winter of 1960 was the precursor to what became known as the National Institutional Research Forum (NIRF). Lins (1966), Brackett (1983), and Reichard (in press) hold that the first NIRF was conceived during the previously mentioned SREB workshop held in the summer of that same year. Given the stature of those in attendance at the two meetings, both groups of authors are probably right. They all agree, however, that attendance at the first NIRF was *by invitation only*. A planning committee of eight individuals was formed, representing the four geographic regions of the country. The names of this first group read like an IR Hall of Fame: John Folger, Associate Director for Research, SREB (Chair): James I. Doi, Director of Institutional Research, University of Colorado; Hall T. Sprague, Staff Associate, WICHE; John Morris, Director of Institutional Research, University of Mississippi; Kevin Bunnell, Research and Administrative Associate, NEBHE; Edwin F. Hallenbeck, Director of Institutional Research, University of Rhode Island; John E. Stecklein, Director of Institutional Research, University of Minnesota; and L. Joseph Lins, Professor and Coordinator of Institutional Research, University of Wisconsin. The first NIRF was held in March 1961 in Chicago, again just before the annual AAHE meeting. The program topics included faculty workload studies, the costs of college attendance, and studies about curriculum and instruction. There were 46 in attendance including the members of the planning committee (Lins, 1966). A list of the attendees is contained in Appendix A.

Planning for the second NIRF, with John Stecklein from the University of Minnesota as chair, followed the same model. The planning committee still consisted of eight individuals, and most of the original members remained involved. Attendance was still by invitation only (no more than 50 people), and the meeting was held in Chicago preceding the 1962 AAHE conference. In addition to the program presentations and the collegial discussions, the second NIRF contained two highlights. First, John Dale Russell and A. J. Brumbaugh were honored as "deans" of institutional research "for their long service to the principles of and their major contributions to institutional research" (Lins, 1966, p. i). Second, major changes to the program format and the attendance requirements were recommended for the future.

One reason for these recommendations was that the selective nature of the first two NIRFs was becoming a contentious issue. And, as has been discussed previously, there were enough workshops occurring so that interest in institutional research was building, and more and more people were working in the field. By their very nature, the first two NIRFs had excluded practitioners from state colleges, liberal arts institutions, and junior colleges (Doi, 1979). In response to the invitational NIRFs, Charles Howell, Director of Research at Northern Illinois University (NIU), hosted a Conference on Institutional Research in Higher Education just after the second NIRF to meet the growing demand. According to Doi (1979), the keynote speaker at the conference, nearly 200 people attended. An expected attempt to form a national institutional research association at the NIU conference did not materialize because of the program and attendance recommendations made at the second NIRF. Howell sponsored a second conference at Northern Illinois in 1963, but the changes he and others had sought had occurred.

The third NIRF was held in May 1963 on the campus of Wayne State University in Detroit. Because of the recommendations made the previous year, the 10-member planning committee—which was selected nationally rather than geographically—provided a meeting, the primary purpose of which was to "exchange ideas on the need for and methodology of conducting research on institutional problems—research directed to the analysis of data, the results of which contribute to sound administrative judgments and decisions" (Lins, 1966, p. ii). Both general and workshop sessions were held, rather than only small seminars as had occurred at previous conferences. Special topical sessions were held on admissions predictors, space utilization, student studies, faculty studies, faculty load, inter-institutional cooperation, and learning effects of new media (Tetlow, 1973, p. 79). And, as indicated, for the first time, the meeting was held on a college campus. The program theme was "The Role of Institutional Research in Planning," and, for the first time, conference proceedings were published (Lins, 1963). Proceedings were not published following the first two NIRFs, although Howell had published proceedings for both conferences he had sponsored at Northern Illinois in 1962 and 1963 (Northern Illinois University, 1962, 1963). The third NIRF was attended by almost 200 people, and it represented a fundamental change in institutional research gatherings—more open and more comprehensive—but still evolving. The attendees voted to continue the meeting's informal structure for another year, but they asked the planning committee for the next Forum to "investigate the possibilities and desirability of forming a formal organization of the NIRF with that title or some other appropriate title" (Lins, 1966, p. ii).

The fourth NIRF was held in May 1964 at the University of Minnesota with about 150 people in attendance. The program theme was "A Conceptual Framework for Institutional Research," and proceedings were published (Bagley, 1964). Tetlow (1973) reports that three frameworks were discussed: "an educational research basis, a totally decentralized effort, and an administrative issues basis" (p. 80). He also reported that "The discussion sessions centered on policy questions" (p. 80). What makes this noteworthy is that when the conference attendees evaluated the program, they were more interested in concrete administrative applications and methodology rather than conceptual and policy matters. They also voted to establish a formal institutional research organization, and a committee was formed to draft a constitution for presentation at the 1965 meeting. The Constitution Committee consisted of Robert E. Hubbard (chair), James I. Doi, Stuart Grout, L. Joseph Lins, and John E. Stecklein (Lins, 1966).

The Committee produced a draft that was presented at the fifth NIRF held at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Stony Brook in May 1965. The most contentious issue for the Committee and for those at the business session was membership qualifications, namely, whether a distinction should be made between IR practitioners and individuals who were just interested in IR. Nevertheless, the Constitution passed, and the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) was established. The initial slate of officers consisted of President, John E. Stecklein, University of Minnesota; Vice President, James R. Montgomery, University of Tennessee; Past President, Stuart Grout, Boston University (Grout had been the Chair of the 1964–65 Planning Committee); Secretary and Membership Committee Chair, L. Joseph Lins, University of Wisconsin; and Treasurer, Stanley O. Ikenberry, West Virginia University. Executive Committee Members-at-Large included Leo F. Redfern, University of Massachusetts; Joe L. Saupe, Michigan State University; James I. Doi, University of Michigan; and John J. Coffelt, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Clarence Bagley, University of Minnesota, was appointed as Editor and was made an *ex officio* member of the Executive Committee. The program theme was "Design and Methodology in Institutional Research," and proceedings were subsequently published (Bagley, 1965). About 250 people attended this historic conference where the field of institutional research took a major step towards professionalization (Lins, 1966).

The sixth annual forum, the first annual meeting of AIR, was held in May 1966 in Boston, and the program theme was "Research on Academic Input." About 250 people attended. By that time, the Association had been incorporated as a nonprofit organization in the state of Michigan with 371 paid members, 282 full members, and 89 associate members. Thus, institutional research had arrived as a recognized area in higher education administration. But, it was by no means mature. There had been some early definitions of exactly what IR is, but there would be more. Institutional researchers were beginning to learn who their colleagues were—some in offices with "institutional research" in the title, but others from the faculty, and still others from registrar, admissions, student affairs, and business offices. IR had evolved enough to form its own national professional organization, but the Association for Institutional Research was so weak financially that it basically was run by the officers and other members of the Executive Committee out of their offices at their home institutions with the help of other volunteer workers. In other words, IR had room to grow, on many levels.

Early Childhood; Identity; Towards Management: 1965–1975

In many ways, the history of institutional research from the mid-1960s on closely paralleled the history of AIR. I shall not discuss the Association's history here, primarily because Rich Howard has ably done that in another chapter of this monograph. Instead, I will turn to the other half of the title of this chapter, namely the role of institutional research "in American Higher Education Over the Past 50 Years." I will, of necessity, refer to AIR and its activities here and there, but only as those activities impact institutional research's larger role.

So here we are in the mid-1960s. Institutions of higher education are growing rapidly in both size and complexity. The Baby Boomers have arrived on campuses, and their impact is being felt. Social change is sweeping campuses because of the Free Speech Movement, the Civil Rights movement, and opposition to the Vietnam War. The Higher Education Act of 1965 greatly increased the level of federal support for higher education. Calls are being made for administrators to "manage" their institutions more efficiently and effectively; most of these calls are coming from outside the institutions. After all, most college and university faculty members do not believe that their activities can or should be "managed" at all. Nevertheless, management techniques are developing in higher education, and this thing called *institutional research* is right in the middle of those developments.

In 1966, Francis Rourke and Glenn Brooks authored a book entitled, *The Managerial Revolution in Higher Education*. They argued that "Institutional research lies at the heart of the trend toward the use of modern management techniques in higher education" (p. 44). Unfortunately at the time, there was no agreement about what institutional research actually was, or what it should be. At the same WICHE workshop in 1959 where W. H. Cowley (1960) had described the first 250 years of institutional research, John Dale Russell argued that "Institutional research is a form of applied research," and that it was "...directed toward important problems of the individual institution" (p. 19). Shortly after that, A. J. Brumbaugh (1960) wrote the previously quoted passage about institutional research being able to provide the kind of relevant, factual data necessary for presidents and other higher education administrators to be able to find the right answers to the right questions in order that they might be effective administrators. For their part, Rourke and Brooks (1966) argued that "...institutional research is a variegated form of organizational self-study designed to help colleges and universities gather an expanding range of information about their own internal operations and the effectiveness with which they are using their resources. By collecting such data, institutions hope to make informed judgments instead of guessing or relying on intuitions of the administrator in framing decisions on university policy" (p. 44). This prominent mention of "self study" must have been music to the ears of the officials at accrediting agencies. And, in a precursor of what has become known as "data-driven decision making," Rourke and Brooks went on to say:

> In place of the loose, unstructured, and somewhat casual methods of management practiced in colleges and universities in the past, we have seen a growing commitment to the use of automation in the routine processes of administration, an increased resort to data gathering and (institutional) research as a basis of policy making, and an expanding effort to develop objective criteria for making decisions on the allocation of resources instead of leaving these matters entirely to the play of campus pressures or the force of tradition. (p. 44)

But not everyone agreed. Nevitt Sanford, an early scholar in higher education, argued that institutional research should focus on academic and instructional issues, with emphasis on "theoretical studies of the internal dynamics of colleges and universities, the effectiveness of an institution's academic programs, and the impact of higher education on students" (Lasher & Firnberg, 1983, p. 90; see also Sanford, 1962). With Sanford symbolizing the "academic" end of the IR definitional continuum, John Dale Russell, with his emphasis on studies in support of decisions concerning policy-making and planning, was generally considered to represent the "administrative" end of the spectrum. There was another important distinction between the two camps. Russell favored studies on a particular institution; Sanford focused on the study of higher education in general.

William Tetlow (1973) and Gail Burger Brackett (1983), in their respective doctoral dissertations on the emergence of institutional research and preparation opportunities for its practitioners, provide a full range of IR definitions that lie along the academic/administrative continuum represented by Sanford and Russell. Only a few of the most important definitions relevant to the 1965–75 time period will be mentioned here. For example, at a 1967 workshop on institutional research sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board, W. Hugh Stickler defined IR as follows:

> As discussed here, institutional research refers to research which is directed toward providing data useful or necessary in the making of intelligent administrative decisions and/or for the successful operation, maintenance and/or improvement of a given institution of higher education. It includes the collection and analysis of data used in appraising the environment or "setting" in which the institution operates, in preparing the budget, in planning new buildings, in assigning space in existing buildings, in determining faculty loads, in admitting students, in individualizing instruction, in planning the educational program, in keeping abreast of student

> progress, and the like. It is needed to facilitate efficient operation, but it is also needed to promote qualitative improvements. (as cited in Schietinger, 1968, p. 3)

In 1970, the Association for Institutional Research published *The Nature and Role of Institutional Research: Memo to a College or University,* authored by Joe L. Saupe and James R. Montgomery. Saupe and Montgomery stated that "institutional research consists of data collection, analyses, reporting, and related staff work designed to facilitate operations and decision-making within institutions of higher education" (p. 3). Given that the professionalization of institutional researchers was so new, this was a very important statement, and one sanctioned by IR's young professional organization. Like Stickler, Saupe and Montgomery leaned heavily in the direction of administrative analysis. In supportive statements, they talked of the importance of generating data and organizing it "into forms especially useful for analysis and interpretation" (p. 3) as a resource for decision-making within an institution. And, they recognized the strong relationship between institutional research and the technology of the period. Gone were the days when IR activities centered on tally sheets, stand-alone databases, and clunky calculators; mainframe computers were beginning to have a major impact on how institutional researchers did whatever they did.

In 1971, *Institutional Research in the University: A Handbook* was published. Edited by Paul Dressel, this seminal book brought together the views and ideas of many of the institutional research thought-leaders of the day. In his definition of the basic purpose of institutional research, Dressel harkened back to self-study while emphasizing the search for efficiency and institutional improvement:

> The basic purpose of institutional research is to probe deeply into the workings of an institution for evidence of weaknesses or flaws which interfere with the attainment of its purposes or which utilize an undue amount of resources in so doing. (p. 23)

The notion that the definition of institutional research might vary across different institutions depending on the conditions facing them was advanced in 1971 when Marvin Peterson described his contingency model for institutional research as:

> A model in which the function and content of IR is contingent upon changing conditions in the higher education institution and its environment...[The model] assumes only that institutional research is a process which utilizes information from the university's data base (or management information system), which provides data based research for its decision making process (formal and informal) and contributes primarily to the institution's "adaptive" capacity...[defined as] those organizational processes which make it possible for the college or university to cope with pressures for change whether those are internal changes to improve performance or changes which represent a sensing of, and response to, external conditions or changes. (Peterson, 1971, p. 27)

Peterson's work reflected not only that IR might be different at different institutions, but that it also might need to change at a particular institution as the institution adapted to its environments—both internal and external. He also acknowledged the evolving nature of information technology to databases and management information systems, while focusing on IR as providing "data-based research" in support of institutional decision-making.

About that time, Bernard Sheehan (1971) agreed that the role of institutional research on a campus was contingent on institutional conditions. "The specific role of any office of institutional research (OIR) in support of university policy formulation depends on the institution and the particular situation under review" (p. 20). But he also argued that institutional researchers needed to move beyond what he called the passive mode involving data collection and providing analysis only upon request, to a more active mode characterized by "the OIR's successful anticipation of information required and of problems for which it will be asked to supply alternative solutions for consideration of policy formulators" (p. 20). In this mode, Sheehan argued, the confidence of the policy-makers in the institutional researcher and his/her ability is crucial, but the IR professional must remain neutral as final policy decisions are made and not push favored alternatives or agendas.

Also playing an important part in this debate was Sidney Suslow. During his AIR presidency in 1970–71, Suslow attempted to establish "...precise conceptual boundaries of the definition of institutional research" (1972, p. vii). Following a special conference on the future of IR involving the leaders of the day, Suslow stated, "The institutional researcher serves higher education and, in turn, his institution through critical appraisal and careful investigation of its processes and programs." He went on to say, "In addition to complexities of level and nature, institutional research may be concerned with evaluation of past activities, monitoring of current programs and policies, and modeling and assessment of future possibilities." (Suslow, 1972, pp. 1–2). In his presidential address at the11th AIR Forum in 1971, Suslow summarized his views.

> ...[A] summary statement of institutional research is that it is an attitude of critical appraisal of all aspects of higher education, which has as its primary purpose the assessment and evaluation of the expressed goals of the institution and the means used to achieve those goals, *and* that this assessment and evaluation are guided not by purposes higher than the goals themselves, but simply by the estimated efficiency of the processes and the probable utility of the results. (Stewart, 1971, p. 1)

As interesting and important as the Sanford/Russell or academic/administrative debate was during this period, there is relatively little evidence that the work of institutional research units on many campuses was devoted primarily to the academic end of the continuum. While there were certainly studies aimed at improving the overall instructional process, there is more evidence to suggest that institutional research was being drawn toward the administrative side of the debate—especially at larger public institutions. The studies of the day that analyzed the types of work being carried out in offices of institutional research—including those by Roney (1970), Tincher (1970), Tetlow (1973), and Morstain and Smart (1974)—indicate that studies of students and faculty were always ranked high while studies of curriculum and teaching methods were always ranked low, with studies of financial and facilities matters generally in the middle. Self-studies required by accrediting agencies were never far from view. Tetlow (1973) reported an increasing emphasis on data systems development and the importance of an adequate management information system (MIS). The fact that mainframe computers were becoming more common at institutions had a tremendous impact on the lives of institutional researchers. Some institutions flirted with the alphabet soup of management techniques (e.g., Management By Objectives [MBO], Planning Programming Budgeting System [PPBS], Zero Based Budgeting [ZBB]) developed in other settings, but often tried in higher education after their utility in the original sectors had begun to be questioned. All required institutional data, as did some computer-based models that were developed specifically for higher education. These included CAMPUS (Comprehensive Analytical Methods for Planning in University/College Systems), HELP/PLANTRAN (Higher Education Long-Range Planning/Planning Translator), SEARCH (System for Evaluating Alternative Resource Commitments in Higher Education), and RRPM (Resource Requirements Prediction Model). RRPM was initially developed at the University of California, but it became a staple of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS).

The work of the NCHEMS deserves special mention. The organization began in 1969 at the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) and evolved into a separate, private organization dedicated to developing information and policy tools to improve strategic decision-making in higher education (www.nchems.org/about/index.php). During this period, the staff at NCHEMS, many of them former institutional researchers, developed data definitions and methods for analyzing academic program costs, faculty activities, and facilities utilization, and simulating institutional resource requirements. The organization provided support and training for many institutional researchers, and its work benefited from the input and feedback of practicing IR professionals.

While institutional researchers were trying to better identify what they were doing, and while their institutions were helping to define what they needed from this growing administrative subspecialty, the world of higher education was changing. During the second half of the 1960s, student enrollment continued to grow, and new institutions were established. (At one point, new community colleges were being opened at the rate of one every week.) But many campuses were disrupted by confrontations associated with the opposition to the Vietnam War and the growing Civil Rights and Free Speech movements. And, the first half of the 1970s brought economic recession. Policy-makers became interested in resources and costs, and states began to demand data from public institutions on all sorts of student, faculty, facilities, and financial matters. The federal government also demanded data through its Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS). In addition, higher education became "postsecondary education" with the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 1972, thus opening the financial aid system to new groups of students from proprietary institutions. On most campuses, all this chaos meant that rather than reporting to the president, institutional researchers were just as likely to be assigned to the chief academic officer, and they were dealing with data systems development and reporting demands. Whether they could or should be involved in decision support was still being debated.

Adolescence; More Technology; Everybody's Doing IR; Back Towards Quality: 1975–90

In his excellent treatment of the history and nature of institutional research, Tetlow (1973) gave the following description of IR in the mid-1970s:

> Metaphorically speaking, the IR movement was an "idea" in the nineteen-twenties, "conceived" in the forties, "born" in the fifties, in "infancy" in the early sixties, in "childhood" in the late sixties, and, at the moment, in "puberty." It is now time for IR persons to be less preoccupied with questioning their existence and structure and to spend more energies on growing into "adolescence." (p. 150)

Institutional research had been around formally for about 10–15 years. And yet, on some campuses, its identity was still not quite secure.

Furthermore, the higher education environment continued to provide challenges. Enrollment was no longer guaranteed to increase as it had in the 1960s and early 1970s. The end of the baby boomer generation's impact on colleges and universities was coming into view; the economic difficulties that had become apparent in the early 1970s continued into the latter half of the decade and into the 1980s. There was some evidence of decline in public confidence in higher education. Given these enrollment and financial constraints, institutions turned to strategic planning, new marketing techniques, and the search for greater efficiency. Many faced resource reallocation and retrenchment. There were even a few reports of institutions doing away with their IR offices. Clearly, those departments were not seen as being central to the purposes of their institutions—at least not at the time.

On most campuses, the pressures of the times meant that the debate concerning whether institutional researchers should emphasize academic or administrative studies was usurped by the need to compile data on current institutional operations. In the 1976 *Memorandum to a Newcomer to the Field of Institutional Research*, John Lyons provided an overarching definition of institutional research as "a multi-disciplinary profession that draws on the relevant techniques and insights of modern management science and educational psychology, welding them together into a new analytic approach to institutional governance and the general problems of higher education" (p. 3; Note: This was also the definition used by AIR at the time.). A year later, Bernard Sheehan and Lois Torrence—both past presidents of AIR—were more pointed in their definition. "Institutional Research is the study and analysis of the operations, environments, and processes of institutions of higher education" (Sheehan & Torrence, 1977, p. 2184). Just prior, Sheehan had proposed The Three Hat Theory, which outlined perhaps the perfect role for the institutional researcher of the day.

> ...[I]n responding to the need for management information, institutional research practitioners must be sufficiently versatile to assume the perspectives of three people: first, the person asking for information and choosing to use it for decision making, say, the president; second, the institutional research analyst, wearing his own hat and translating information needed into terms which will admit a solution by those means available—that is, taking into account imprecisions of the question, limitations of the data base, available tools and techniques, time, talent and other resources for proper analysis; and third, the technician to whom the detailed aspects of gathering information are clear and the meaning of the resultant data is unmistakable. (Sheehan, 1976, p. 5)

The Three Hat Theory is quite helpful in describing the institutional research environment of the time. There were a lot of data around. Mainframe computers were prevalent; policy-makers external to institutions were demanding standardized data for resource allocation and accountability purposes; and some, although certainly not all, institutional leaders were using information in their decision-making. Comparative information from similar institutions was being exchanged and analyzed. Massive databases and management information systems were being developed, and there was a large incentive for institutional researchers to be drawn into the technical milieu. At public institutions especially, many institutional researchers were tasked with reporting massive amounts of data to state coordinating and governing agencies. At institutions at all levels, institutional researchers were regularly responsible for responding to federal data mandates through the National Center for Educational Statistics (namely through HEGIS and later IPEDS, the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System). While data reporting has always been an important role played by institutional researchers, on too many campuses, it became their primary function, and there was little time for anything else.

As Sheehan argued, however, there was a more important role. Institutional data needed to be analyzed and converted into management information that could support institutional decision-making, policy determination, and planning (the second hat; later dubbed the *decision-support intermediary* or *manager role*). And by 1981, Saupe, in *The Functions of Institutional Research,* an AIR publication, officially sanctioned this interpretation when he defined institutional research as "research conducted within an institution of higher education in order to provide information which supports institutional planning, policy formulation, and decision making" (p. 1).

This distinction between data and information became a point of argument. Some IR practitioners felt that their responsibility was only to provide data to decision-makers, remaining separate from its interpretation or use. Given their technical capabilities, many had played major roles in developing and improving their institution's databases and information systems, and they were most comfortable wearing Sheehan's first hat. However, other institutional researchers such as Jones (1982), Tetlow (1983), and Firnberg and Lasher (1983) argued that data in their raw form are not very useful. These data need to be selected, organized, and/or analyzed in such a way that they are useful in the context within which they will be used. In other words, this group argued, institutional researchers provide their most essential service when they translate data into information that is relevant to the concerns of the individual who will use it, and when they provide that information to the user in a timely fashion. The emphasis, it was argued, should thereby be on information use and the context within which it will be used. For the data-oriented group, this raised two concerns about the politics of information. First, the institutional researcher's "understanding of the intended use of the information, personal beliefs concerning the issue under consideration, and outlook for the institution are just three examples of areas that could render judgments that could affect the analysis and perhaps ultimately the decision" (Lasher & Firnberg, 1983, p. 91). And secondly,

> ...[I]nformation is always subject to more than one interpretation. That is, the institutional researcher generates and interprets the information within his or her frame of reference, and the user then receives it and uses it within his or her frame of reference... [And] other individuals may...subsequently use the same information based on their own viewpoints. (p. 91)

These two concerns often reinforced the more data-oriented group's preference to refrain from interpreting their institution's data. This stance, the second group argued, reduced their involvement in institutional policy-making and planning. Instead, they argued, the effective institutional researcher should demonstrate his/her expertise by understanding the institution and the issues facing it, understanding the decision and planning processes being used, and being able to work with decision-makers who have different personalities and administrative styles.

While this argument was taking place, the early 1980s also witnessed another shift that should be mentioned. Since institutional data had become such a commodity, and because information technology was moving toward desktop computers, more and more people on campuses were beginning to analyze data—and they weren't all housed in offices of institutional research. As a reaction to what many called the "information society" (Naisbitt, as cited in Lasher, 1983, p. 41)—others called it "information anarchy" (Reichard et al., 1984, p. 3)—staff members from other campus units, such as the planning office, the admissions office, the budget office, the offices of various college deans, the student affairs office, and the occasional policy analyst, began doing studies on the operation of the institution, or at least their part of it. Many in institutional research referred to this as the fragmentation, proliferation, or dispersion of IR (Peterson & Corcoran, 1985b), while others referred to it as distributed IR (Lasher, 1983). To say that these individuals from other offices were "new to institutional research" was a bit of a reach because most of them didn't identify their activities as IR; in fact, they often didn't even know that they were engaged in something called institutional research. Nevertheless, they did provide fertile ground for new membership growth for AIR; and interactions with them led to some interesting professional questions. For example, can an institution have an institutional research office and not be engaged in planning? (Probably.) On the other hand, can an institution be engaged in planning and not have an institutional research function? (Probably not, given the information demands of planning.)

As indicated, the ferocity of the academic versus administrative—the Sanford/Russell—debate concerning the nature of institutional research was largely tempered by this time. Institutional researchers were spending their time meeting data, information, and technology demands from the administrative side of the spectrum. Some began referring to them as higher education "technocrats." In a 1981 AIR survey of professional development needs, Reichard reported that the top 10 activities carried out by institutional research offices included

1. The analysis of student retention and attrition;
2. Development of enrollment projections;
3. Support of institutional-level planning processes;
4. Fact book development;
5. Analysis of instructional program credit-hour costs;
6. Institutional self-study and accreditation;
7. Management information systems;
8. Use of statistical packages for planning and analysis;
9. External reporting needs; and
10. Follow-up surveys of graduates. (as cited in Lindquist, 1999, p. 46)

Reichard also mentioned that institutional researchers in the study who did not work in offices of institutional research tended to be more involved in planning activities.

And, there were other factors also at play. Doi (1979) had argued that among the reasons for the growth of institutional research as a viable area in higher education administration were (a) the growth in the study of the higher education industry by social scientists, and (b) the parallel growth in the number of higher education graduate degree programs and the professors who worked in them. The initial goal of these programs in the 1960s and '70s was to educate and train higher education leaders in the nature and management aspects of their organizations, and most of the early graduates of such programs assumed administrative positions—institutional research included—at the completion of their studies. As the years passed, however, and the general study of higher education as a separate academic discipline became more accepted, more graduates assumed faculty positions. Given their more theoretical orientation and the expectations on them as faculty members, their research interests tended more toward general studies of higher education and less toward studies of the problems facing particular institutions. It can be argued that during this time, institutional research and the more general study of higher education separated and became distinct, with institutional research continuing to be identified as a specialized administrative process or function associated with an institution, a system of institutions, or a group of comparable institutions, and the study of postsecondary education being a more substantive, conceptually based, theoretically oriented academic pursuit designed to increase our knowledge about postsecondary education in general.

In 1985, coinciding with AIR's 25th Annual Forum, Marvin Peterson and Mary Corcoran co-authored an important volume in the *New Directions for Institutional Research* series entitled, *Institutional Research in Transition*. Their perspective on the nature of institutional research provides an excellent summary of the field at that time. "As a field of practice, institutional research, despite some minor dissent, has evolved into a primarily management-oriented, applied, data-handling, analysis, and research function" (1985a, p. 99). In addition to describing the proliferation and fragmentation of institutional research referenced earlier, they analyzed IR as an intermediary function linking the educational, governance, and information or telematics functions of higher education (pp. 1–2). At the end of their work, they recommended that the practice of institutional research be viewed as

> ...an institutional process (not structure or office) that includes the collection and development of information, analysis of research, and utilization activities designed to improve some aspect of an institution of postsecondary education. Under this conception, institutional research includes varying types of research designed to serve planning, policy development, resource allocation, and management or evaluation decisions in all functional areas. (pp. 107–108)

They also suggested that as institutional research entered young adulthood, it should be considered in a more integrated framework that views colleges and universities across the postsecondary landscape as complex organizations that interact with their environments, that link resources to the their educational, research, and service outputs, and that use appropriate internal and external data and information to inform planning, management, resource allocation, and evaluation decisions (pp. 109–110). In other words, they argued the need to renew the dialogue with those interested in the more general, theoretical study of higher education.

Towards Quality

But the mid-1980s were also a time of transition on another dimension. Interest in the assessment of student outcomes had grown steadily for about a decade. In April 1983, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform,* was delivered to then Secretary of Education, Terrel Bell (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The report was highly critical of the U.S. elementary and secondary schools. Although the quality of the American higher education system was not addressed in the report, attention was soon turned toward the postsecondary sector. In 1984, the National Institute of Education Study Group on the Conditions of Excellence in American Postsecondary Education "linked outcomes assessment with institutional improvement and suggest[ed] that assessment be a major part of any institution's quest for quality" (Ewell, 1985, p. 2). Many states mandated that institutions undertake outcomes assessment. Several of the regional accrediting bodies had been calling for similar assessments to be included in the institutional self-study process required for reaccreditation. For example, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools adopted an institutional effectiveness criterion that called for the explicit assessment of student outcomes as part of its reaccreditation requirements. By 1986, all regional accrediting associations were required by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation to insist that institutions

1. Sharpen statements of mission and objectives to identify intended educational outcomes;
2. Develop additional effective means of assessing learning outcomes and results; and
3. Use the self-evaluation and peer-review processes of accreditation as an integral part of ongoing planning and institutional or programmatic change." (Nichols, 1990, p. 2)

The trend toward outcomes assessment meant a whole new set of activities for those institutional researchers who were still mainly involved in data gathering and reporting. And for those who were more involved in support of administrative issues and institutional planning, their work began to move back towards the academic end of that old continuum—back toward student learning, academic progress, and quality.

Early Adulthood; Outcomes Assessment; Effectiveness; Demand for Quality; Towards Performance: 1990–2005

During the Reagan presidency in the 1980s, there were efforts to reduce the size of the federal government. As a result of these efforts, the costs of several social programs were devolved to the states. During the 1990s, public higher education competed for funding not only with K-12 education and prisons, but also with Medicaid, and, in some cases, the desire to return funds to citizens through tax cuts. The decade began with a recession, and, in 1992–93, state appropriations for higher education declined as compared with prior years for the first time (Hines, 1993). State leaders began to refer to public higher education as a "discretionary" expense. The remainder of the decade was much better economically, but institutional costs and tuition continued to increase, and the availability of financial aid became a central component in students' decisions concerning whether to pursue postsecondary education and, if so, where. The debate over institutional effectiveness, productivity, and quality intensified, and the push towards assessment continued. Total Quality Management and Continuous Quality Improvement concepts and techniques began to appear in campus discussions. The relationship between higher education and state economic development continued to develop as institutions played a knowledge development function through teaching and research, as well as technology transfer. Unfortunately, this raised questions about whether research universities were de-emphasizing undergraduate education. At the same time, the issues of access for disadvantaged groups and cultural diversity on campuses grew in importance, along with the associated problems of student persistence and attrition.

Institutional research, as usual, reflected the times and institutional needs. As a result of the increasing interest in quality and institutional effectiveness on the part of accrediting agencies and state policy-makers, assessment studies became more and more important. However, there is some evidence to suggest that institutional researchers were not all as involved in these efforts as one might have expected. Rogers and Gentemann (1989) found that few of the Southern institutions in their study were providing evidence of institutional effectiveness, and only a minority of IR offices on those campuses carried out studies of student outcomes. Volkwein, Agrotes, and Hannahs (1989), in a study of institutions in the Northeast, found that while assessment studies were carried out on some campuses—and especially at two-year institutions—their efforts were often not the responsibility of the office of institutional research. Instead, offices on campuses in that part of the country were involved in student attrition/retention studies, reporting all kinds of data—especially student data—inter-institutional data exchange, and producing campus fact books.

So, traditional IR activities continued. In 1990, AIR published a second edition of *The Functions of Institutional Research*, authored by Joe Saupe. The basic definition of institutional research had not changed much from the first edition. "Institutional research is research conducted within an institution of higher education to provide information which supports institutional planning, policy formation and decision making" (p. 1). However, Saupe went on to allow for the fact that IR is often carried out within higher education systems and between institutions and in academic and administrative offices that carry titles other than institutional research and by individuals whose job responsibilities are described as being something other than "institutional researcher." He also made the distinction between IR and higher education research in general:

> Institutional research can be distinguished from research on postsecondary education which has as its purpose the advancement of knowledge about and practice in postsecondary education generally. The subject of institutional research is the individual college, university, or system. While institutional research can involve data and analyses which contribute to wider knowledge about how colleges and individuals function, this type of result generally is not sought for its own sake. (p. 1)

In the remainder of this classic document, Saupe describes IR on some campuses as institutional problem identification, action research, or policy research. He details its uses in various administrative areas–to improve teaching and learning, academic program evaluation, assessment, student research (engagement, climates), financial analysis, data administration, and explains its associated responsibilities–state and federal reporting (specifically IPEDS), planning/policy/decision support, modeling, comparative analysis, and inter-institutional data exchange. This broad array of descriptions for institutional research and IR activities during this period may have led to the question, "What *isn't* institutional research?" As Saupe describes, "Institutional research, then, is an essential ingredient of sound college or university governance. It should occur throughout the institution wherever any sort of planning occurs, any type of policy issues is considered and any decision about some aspect of the institution is proposed" (1990, p. 3). In its various forms, IR was operationally defined differently on different campuses to reflect their analytical needs at the time.

Along these same lines, J. Fredericks Volkwein (1990) found that institutional research was "...less a unified profession than an evolving ecology of very different organizational arrangements" (p. 23). Using the literature on organizational evolution, Volkwein developed the following four-category typology to describe institutional research offices on various campuses.

1. Craft Structure: On a majority of campuses, institutional research staff consists of one person, perhaps even on a part-time basis, who is burdened by the demands of routine reporting and a modest amount of number-crunching for the institution...A few such offices are engaged in outcomes research and other forms of analysis...Craft structures dominate the ranks of educational institutions with enrollments under 5,000.
2. Small Adhocracy: ...[T]he two or three person office...characterized by flat hierarchy, simple structure, and little specialization. The tasks of this group...are varied and uneven from one campus to another. Some offices are engaged in

applied-research projects, and some are not...Small adhocracies are responsive to their administrative hosts...and tend to be found in comprehensive colleges and two-year colleges with enrollments between 5,000 and 10,000.

3. Professional Bureaucracy: Consisting of at least four (but usually more) professionals, these institutional research offices have developed a modest bureaucratic structure in terms of hierarchy, division of labor, and specialization... Such offices typically carry out a number of sophisticated research projects each year and responsibility for these projects is more likely to be centralized in the institutional research office than on most campuses...[T]he purest examples are found at doctoral universities...
4. Elaborate Profusion: ...[I]nstitutional research activities and expertise proliferate throughout the institution. On these campuses, usually research universities, the analytical environment is so complex that institutional research has become dispersed between a number of different offices reporting to different parts of the administrative hierarchy. Much institutional analysis is decentralized, if not fragmented, and only loosely coordinated. Not many institutions exhibit this elaborateness...(1990, pp. 23–25)

Volkwein's typology was based on a survey of institutions in the Northeast Association of Institutional Research. Yet, the descriptions of activities within the various categories of IR offices contained a great deal of face validity for the state of institutional research at the time.

In reviews of several AIR surveys of institutional research characteristics and separate studies of differences in various regions of the United States and Canada, Sarah Lindquist (1999) and John Muffo (1999) found—like Volkwein—that the size of IR offices on various campuses was directly related to institutional size. They also found that smaller IR offices tended to report to institutional presidents or chancellors, while larger IR offices mostly reported to a vice president/chancellor. All IR offices were heavily involved in data reporting to both internal and external entities, as well as enrollment management studies. Staff in larger offices carried out a broader array of analytical tasks (Volkwein, 1999a). Muffo also found that the areas of outcomes assessment and institutional self-study were seen as being more important in institutions where the regional accrediting agency had established standards for institutional effectiveness and where states had mandated particular accountability requirements. He also found that Canadian institutional researchers tended to be more involved in budgeting and planning activities than most of their counterparts in the United States.

In 1993, Patrick Terenzini broadened Saupe's definition of institutional research by using the concept of "organizational intelligence" based on the views that had been offered previously by Wilensky (1969) and Fincher (1978; 1985). According to Terenzini (1993), the organizational intelligence provided by institutional researchers is derived from "...the data gathered about an institution, ...their analysis and transformation into information, and...the insight and informed sense of the organization that a competent institutional researcher brings to the interpretation of that information" (p. 3). Organizational intelligence derives from the institutional researcher's technical/analytical intelligence (the factual knowledge the IR professional has concerning his/her institution, and the broad array of methodological skills which he/she brings to the job, including the wide variety of information technology skills); issues intelligence (a knowledge and understanding of the major issues facing the institution and its leaders); and contextual intelligence (an understanding of the culture of higher education in general and the politics and dynamics of the institutional researcher's home institution). Terenzini (1995) later worried that many institutional researchers tend to emphasize technical/analytical intelligence because of a preoccupation with technology. His fear was that this focus unfortunately limits their effectiveness and reduces their participation in the discussion of the important issues facing their institution and their involvement in decision-making. In a subsequent study of institutional research effectiveness, Knight, Moore, and Coperthwaite (1997; 1999) found that institutional researchers tended to believe that they possessed adequate technical/analytical intelligence and issues intelligence as delineated by Terenzini. However, they believed that they possessed contextual intelligence to a lesser extent. Whether they were considered effective in their work depended on their institutional situation. "The effectiveness of institutional research can perhaps be evaluated only relative to both the capabilities, experiences, and orientation of the institutional researcher and the expectations, experiences, orientation toward information and rational decision making, and personalities of the institutional leadership" (1999, pp. 38–39).

By the end of the decade, within the context of the five major postsecondary education policy concerns of the day—the high price of college, the need for management efficiency and increased productivity, institutional effectiveness, access to postsecondary education for all, and accountability—Volkwein (1999b) argued that institutional research had four basic purposes and roles. The first role was as Information Authority—that is, the responsibility to describe the institution's shape, size (in terms of students, faculty, and staff), and activities using data and information. This was basically part of Terenzini's notion of technical/analytical intelligence. The second role was as Policy Analyst—that is, working with the institution's leadership providing support for planning and resource allocation decisions, policy issues, and other problems facing the institution. This reflected the other part of Terenzini's idea of technical/analytical intelligence, as well as his notion of issues intelligence. Volkwein's third role was as Spin Doctor—that is, using institutional information and analysis to present the institution in the most favorable light, especially to funding sources and policy-makers. Volkwein cautioned that although this role was a worthy one, it should only be carried out within ethical standards. The fourth role was as Scholar and Researcher—that is, impartially carrying out studies of institutional effectiveness, legal compliance, performance, and accountability for external authorities such as state agencies and regional accrediting associations such as the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Volkwein, 1999b, pp. 17–18).

At the same time, Peterson (1999) updated his earlier analysis of the evolution of institutional research in preparation for the new century. He argued that postsecondary education should be viewed according to its standing as part of the education industry. Since the 1950s, according to this view, the higher education industry had transitioned from its traditional rather elitist role to mass higher education, and then from mass higher education to postsecondary education. This had resulted in the addition of two new types of institutions—community colleges and proprietary institutions—but the process of delivering education had remained largely unchanged. At the dawn of the 21st century, Peterson identified seven "societal conditions" which would impact postsecondary education and possibly force a redesign.

1. Changing Patterns of Diversity: Although postsecondary institutions had had some success in improving access for various disadvantaged groups, retention and graduation rates had lagged. In addition, the definition of cultural diversity continued to change as new disadvantaged groups began to press for inclusion.
2. The Telematics Revolution: "Probably the most pervasive challenge to the postsecondary industry and its institutions is the rapid expansion of interactive telecommunications networks linking student and faculty to extensive data sources via workstations capable of presenting information by integrating text, audio, and video" (p. 92). Distance education was only one aspect of this challenge. All institutions, Peterson argued, would have to determine how best to use these new tools for teaching, learning, and research. In addition, new telecommunications and information resource organizations were developing to compete with colleges and universities to offer postsecondary education.
3. Academic and Institutional Quality Reform: The pervasive nature of the demand for academic quality is highlighted in his statement, "In the mid-1990s, academic quality has become associated with public accountability and with a focus on student learning, faculty productivity and performance, program effectiveness, and even institutional performance indicators" (p. 93).
4. Economic Productivity: Peterson argued that, in addition to providing education and training, pure and applied research, and the transfer of technology to the private sector, many institutions—research universities, mostly—were being asked to participate in developing and directly managing regional and state economic development efforts. Such efforts are risky if they detract from undergraduate education or if the economic environment deteriorates.

5. New Markets, Modes, and Models for Postsecondary Relearning: This referred to new types of students/customers who needed job training or further education to remain viable in their present jobs or professions or prepare for new careers. These students did not necessarily want or need traditionally structured academic programs. They were often seeking new and different credentials being required in the private sector and in some professions. They demanded new specifically tailored educational experiences that matched their individual needs. And some of the new competing institutions mentioned previously were working to meet those needs.
6. Globalization: From the growing international networks of government policy analysts, experts from the private sector, and higher education scholars studying significant social, economic, and scientific issues to the development of distance and on-site educational programs and institutions, American postsecondary education was being increasingly affected by the international environment.
7. The seventh and final condition on Peterson's list was Resource Constraint. However, he paid little attention to it because he felt it was quite well understood. How prophetic that sentiment was. (Peterson, 1999, pp. 89–97)

Based on his list of societal conditions, Peterson argued for a new role for institutional researchers, that of *Postsecondary Industry Analyst*. As proposed, this involved monitoring social and industry conditions (a broadened notion of Terenzini's idea of contextual intelligence), reviewing strategic options, monitoring the balance between the institution's traditional core activities and the new efforts on the periphery, assessing and reviewing programs, and expanding assessment activities to determine the readiness and capacity of an institution to adapt to the new postsecondary industrial environment (1999, pp. 101–103).

The New Millennium

As the calendar turned 2000, the postsecondary industry survived the dreaded Y2K problem pretty well. The same cannot be said for the condition of the U.S. economy. In early 2000, the dot.com bubble burst sending the stock market tumbling and the economy into recession. Reflecting this downturn, endowments for colleges and universities decreased by an average of 3.5% in 2001 and another 6.2% in 2002 (National Association of Colleges and University Business Officers [NACUBO], 2008). Voluntary support of higher education (i.e., private giving) increased at a significantly lower rate in 2001 than in the previous decade, and then declined in 2002, 2003, and 2004, well after the stock market had begun to right itself (Council for Aid to Education [CAE], 2011, p. 3). State economies also declined, although a bit later. Increases in state appropriations for public higher education were markedly smaller in the early years of the decade reflecting the downturn in the national economy. There were even year-to-year decreases in some states. In 2003–04, total appropriations for all states declined for the first time since the recession of the early 1990s (Palmer, 2004). That year, there were appropriations decreases in 23 states with Colorado, South Carolina, Massachusetts, and California being hit the hardest.

The appropriations reductions caused public institutions to do what they had become accustomed to doing in such situations—raise tuition. During the period from 1980 to 2000, tuition at all types of nonprofit institutions basically doubled in inflation-adjusted terms. In the early years of the decade beginning in 2000, tuition increases took off at public four-year institutions in inverse relationship to the reductions in state appropriations (Baum & Ma, 2010, p. 18). While the press tended to concentrate on the significantly higher tuition levels charged by the elite private institutions, many state legislators pressured public institutions to do more with less. Community colleges, because of their historic commitment to low prices, were more successful than their four-year counterparts at meeting this demand. In the private sector, many institutions continued to employ tuition discounting, that is, using campus-based financial aid strategically to manage enrollment and achieve revenue goals. They had begun this practice in the late 1980s and 1990s. By the early 2000s, however, tuition discounting was also being tried at some public institutions (Baum & Lapovsky, 2006).

The general public continued to feel that going to college was an essential ticket to a better life; however, they were increasingly concerned about access and affordability. Many savings devices (e.g., 529 plans and tax credits) had been established during the 1990s, but they benefited primarily the middle class. Members of historically underrepresented groups, primarily African Americans and Hispanics, were increasingly concerned about the growing importance of higher education and access to it (Immerwahr, 2004).

State policy-makers increasingly focused on ways to make public colleges and universities more accountable. Many states mandated performance, or results-based, systems that related state funding to public institutional performance on various measures. Some of these systems tied specified amounts of state funding directly to institutional performance on the prescribed indicators. (Researchers termed this type of system *performance funding.)* In other states, institutional performance indicators were considered along with other information in the appropriations process, but there was no direct tie between performance and funding. (Researchers called this type of system *performance budgeting.)* By 2001, 19 states reported using performance funding, while 27 reported using performance budgeting (Burke & Minassians, 2003). Obviously, some states used both. However, during the economic downturn of the early 2000s, two things occurred that reduced the use of such systems. First, support for such systems—especially performance funding—eroded when states faced fiscal crises. Secondly, in 2000, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (NCPPHE) produced "Measuring Up," which they called a "State-by-State Report Card for Higher Education" (NCPPHE, 2000). This report considered the performance of state higher education systems in five areas:

1. preparation—how well students are prepared to take advantage of college;
2. participation—whether state residents have sufficient opportunities to enroll in college-level programs;
3. affordability—for students and families;
4. completion—whether students make progress toward and complete their certificate or degree programs in a timely manner; and
5. benefits—the economic and civic benefits the state receives from educating its residents.

The report also considered a sixth area, learning (the result of education and training beyond high school), but all states lacked sufficient information in this area to allow grades to be given. The NCPPHE continued to issue "Measuring Up" report cards roughly every two years during the decade (NCPPHE 2000; 2002; 2004; 2006; 2008). But in 2003, Burke and Minassians hailed the report card as the beginning of a trend toward a third type of approach to higher education accountability beyond performance funding and performance budgeting. They called it *performance reporting* and defined it as the use of periodic reports recounting statewide and institutional results (public institutions mostly) on indicators similar to those used in performance funding and performance budgeting systems. In other words, in performance reporting, publicity is used rather than funding or budgeting to stimulate institutional performance on desired indicators. During the early 2000s, this became the preferred "performance" approach, primarily because such information tends to meet accountability goals at a comparatively low cost. It was reported that 46 states used performance reporting in 2003 (Burke & Minassians, 2003).

For institutional researchers, the distinctions between performance funding, performance budgeting, or performance reporting systems were not particularly meaningful. They had been preparing the information needed to provide the performance indicators on their campuses for many years, and they were called upon again. Although the performance measures for any particular system varied, the following list is a representative set: student retention/persistence and graduation rates, enrollment by ethnic group, certificates/degrees awarded and by ethnic group, percentage of graduates who are first generation attending college, pass rates on professional licensure examinations, job placement rates, student satisfaction, credit hours enrolled and/or completed, time to degree, college affordability, faculty work load, transfer rates from community colleges to four-year institutions, developmental course completion rates, faculty/student ratios, expenditures on sponsored research projects, faculty/staff by ethnic category, and space utilization rates.

Of course, providing performance measures for their institutions was not the only activity of institutional researchers in the first few years of the 21st century. In fact, in 2001, McLaughlin and Howard provided an excellent summary of the state of the IR at that time.

> During the past 40 years, the [institutional research] profession has developed and matured into a vital function in higher education. This development has occurred in an environment of rapidly changing expectations of higher education that have been characterized by expanded capabilities of technology and increased demand for its services, shrinking resources, and vocal demands for accountability. As higher education has reacted to the changing demands of society, institutional research has become a key player by providing reliable data and valid information, responding to accountability demands, assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of institutional processes and programs, and preparing for future challenges. (p. 163)

The IR function of which McLaughlin and Howard spoke was, of course, even more distributed than it had been 20 years earlier when it began to decentralize. The advancements in information technology allowed institutional researchers to create data warehouses and data marts to provide access to institutional data to users across the institution. Desktop computing, handheld computers, and the Internet allowed institutional research to be carried out not only by individuals who called themselves institutional researchers, but also by other staff in other administrative offices, and by individual faculty members and faculty committees.

And yet, the basic purpose of institutional research, whether carried out by IR staff members or by others, remained pretty much the same as in the late 1990s—that is, collecting institutional data, analyzing it to transform it into useful information, and disseminating the results to key constituents in a timely fashion in support of managing, planning, and evaluating institutional programs and processes.

> As a function, institutional research needs to take a strategic view of the institution and its role. Its relevance comes from adding value to data and information and improving institutional intelligence. As such, the institutional research function must position its information infrastructure in such a way that its activities enhance the value of information that is produced... (McLaughlin & Howard, 2001, p. 173)

McLaughlin and Howard (2001) argued that when institutional researchers transform institutional data into information, value is added to the institution. Furthermore, as one of the "information professions," the transformation of facts into organizational intelligence is one of IR's core competencies (p. 176). McLaughlin and Howard proposed the Information Support Circle as the model of the process "...by which the organization converts data into information and then uses that information to increase organizational intelligence" (p. 176). The model contained three primary roles: "the supplier or custodian of the data, the broker who converts the data into information, and the customer or manager who uses the information as increased intelligence" (p. 176). It also contained five functions: "identifying the problem, acquiring the appropriate data, restructuring and analyzing the data, providing the resulting information to the manager, and the use of the information in the context of the problem" (pp. 176–182). (These functions are similar to the steps in the Institutional Research Life Cycle developed by Borden, Massa, and Milam [2001].) The roles in this model are often played or coordinated by institutional researchers, and the functions "represent a sequential set of tasks that are typically associated with institutional research" (p. 177). Institutional researchers are often the custodians of their institution's data, whether the data are produced internally or externally. Institutional researchers often play the broker role as they use their research and technical skills to restructure, analyze, and integrate the data, thus transforming it into useable management information. While institutional researchers are not often the end users of the information, they can increase the information's usefulness through their understanding of the specific problem at hand, the decision-making styles and perspectives of the individuals to whom the information is provided, and the issues confronting their institution at the present time and in the future. Much of this harkens back to Terenzini's three levels of intelligence required for effective institutional research and to Sheehan's Three Hat Theory.

In 2003, William Knight, editor of *The Primer for Institutional Research,* commented, "Despite the maturation of the profession, the question, *What is institutional research?*, seems to be perpetual" (p, vi). At the middle of the first decade of the 21st century, this statement still had a ring of truth to it. More to the point, however, may be the fact that although we in the profession knew, at least theoretically, the nature of our work, the operational definition of IR differed from campus to campus depending on the function the institution needed institutional research to play—be it analytical studies, planning, assessment, institutional effectiveness, a combination of these, or none of them. On many campuses, frustrations continued. Institutional researchers were involved too much in data reporting and not enough in carrying out important analyses of institutional issues and processes. They were not seen as sufficiently engaged in supporting institutional decision-making and planning. They were not seen as part of the institutional leadership team (Billups & DeLucia, 1990; Knight, Moore, & Coperthwaite, 1997).

Maturation; Accountability; Middle Age Crisis?: 2005–Present

The following quote, although written in 2001, provides a good summary of higher education in the latter part of the first decade of the 21st century.

> Accountability has come in the form of increasingly detailed reports about the institution's operations and outcomes required by governing and funding agencies. In addition, specific requirements for evidence of programmatic and institutional assessment from accrediting bodies reflect an increasing pressure from society for

higher education to demonstrate its value to our communities, the country, and the world. (McLaughlin & Howard, 2001, p. 168)

The national economy improved during the middle part of the decade, and the stock market meandered higher until problems in the housing market became too much to bear. In 2007, the bubble in housing prices, that had been growing steadily, burst. This resulted in defaults on subprime mortgages and, by the fall of 2008, a full-blown banking crisis. The federal government decided not to bail out Lehman Bros. from default in September 2008, and the stock market, which had become wobbly, began a period of sharp decline that lasted until March 2009. The Great Recession was on, and higher education, like all other sectors of American life, felt its effects.

For public institutions, the recession ended the growth in state and local support that occurred from 2004 to 2008. Overall, state appropriations declined in both 2009 and 2010 (Palmer, 2010a). In real terms, appropriations per full-time-equivalent student in 2010 were at its lowest level in 25 years (State Higher Education Executive Officers [SHEEO], 2011). In early 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was enacted. This federal stimulus funding allowed states to stabilize their budgets for 2009 and 2010. "In 2010, 43 states provided ARRA funds to their higher education systems..." (SHEEO, 2011, p. 7). Unfortunately, those funds were not available to states for the future. Basically during this period, enrollment growth at public institutions was significant, but state appropriations levels were stagnant or worse. Some 32 states reported declines in higher education appropriations from fiscal year 2010 to fiscal year 2011 (Palmer, 2010b).

Private institutions were also affected, both because of declines in fund-raising and because of endowment performance. Although endowment managers had increased their institutions' collective wealth in the early part of the decade, endowments at all institutions decreased 3% in 2008 and 18.7% in 2009—a direct reflection of the recession and the decline in the stock market (NACUBO, 2009; 2010). However, given that many of the larger endowments had major investments in illiquid alternative investments, several major private institutions had to take out loans to meet their operating expense needs. By 2010, endowments had rebounded somewhat, increasing 11.9% (NACUBO, 2011). Private giving decreased significantly in 2009 (down 11.9%) following the stock market. It rebounded a little in 2010, but only to where it had been in 2006 (CAE, 2011).

In late 2010, the College Board reported that during the decade of 2000–01 to 2010–11, tuition at public four-year colleges and universities had increased annually at the rate of 5.6% *beyond* inflation. Tuition at private four-year institutions had increased at an average inflation-adjusted rate of 3% during the decade. The comparable figure was 2.7% at public two-year institutions. These increases followed hikes averaging roughly 3% after inflation in all three sectors during the 1990s and around 4% at public two-year and public four-year institutions and 5% at private four-year institutions during the 1980s (Baum

& Ma, 2010, p. 3). Increases in financial aid have helped offset increases for tuition, fees, room, and board, but less so for students enrolled in public four-year institutions (Baum & Ma, 2010, p. 15). In the middle of the decade, the NCPPHE produced charts that showed that from the early 1980s to the mid-2000s college tuition and fees increased faster than the costs of medical care, food, housing, apparel, transportation, energy, the consumer price index, and median family income (NCPPHE, 2006, p. 19; 2008, p. 8). It's no wonder that college affordability has become a major public policy issue.

There was a general opinion that postsecondary education must be more accessible, more affordable, and more accountable, while maintaining and increasing its quality. As one of the manifestations of this opinion, then Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings established the Commission on the Future of Higher Education in 2005 with a charge to create a "comprehensive national strategy" for postsecondary education (*The Chronicle of Higher Education,* 2006). After a process filled with controversy, the Commission published its final report, *A Test of Leadership: Charting the Future of U.S. Higher Education,* in late 2006 (U.S Department of Education). It found that although American higher education was still the best in the world, it was losing ground. The Commission's other seven findings provide a good status report on higher education during this period:

> The Value of Higher Education: In today's knowledge-driven economy, higher education has never been more important. (p. 7)
>
> Access: [A]ccess to American higher education is unduly limited by the complex interplay of inadequate preparation [in the K-12 system], lack of information about college opportunities, and persistent financial barriers. (p. 1)
>
> Cost and Affordability: Our higher education financing system is increasingly dysfunctional. State subsidies are declining; tuition is rising; and cost per student is increasing faster than inflation or family income. Affordability is directly affected by a financing system that provides limited incentives for colleges and universities to take aggressive steps to improve institutional efficiency and productivity. Public concern about rising costs may ultimately contribute to the erosion in public confidence in higher education. (p. 10)
>
> Financial Aid: The entire financial aid system—including federal, state, institutional, and private programs—is confusing, complex, inefficient, duplicative, and frequently does not direct aid to students who truly need it. Need-based financial aid is not keeping pace with rising tuition. (p. 12)
>
> Learning: As other nations rapidly improve their higher education systems, we are disturbed by the evidence that the quality of student learning at U.S. colleges and universities is inadequate and, in some cases, declining. (p. 3)
>
> Transparency and Accountability: There is inadequate transparency and accountability for measuring institutional performance, which is more and more

necessary to maintaining public trust in higher education (p. 14). [And of particular interest to institutional researchers:] We have noted a remarkable shortage of clear, accessible information about crucial aspects of American colleges and universities, from financial aid to graduate rates. Because data systems are so limited and inadequate, it is hard for policymakers to obtain reliable information on students' progress through the educational pipeline. This lack of useful data and accountability hinders policymakers and the public from making informed decisions and prevents higher education from demonstrating its contribution to the public good. (p. 4)

Innovation: Too many of our colleges and universities have not embraced opportunities to be entrepreneurial, from testing new methods of teaching and content delivery to meeting the increased demand for lifelong learning (pp. 4–5). ... [T]he results of scholarly research on teaching and learning are rarely translated into practice, especially... in fields such as teacher preparation and math and science education. We also find that little of the significant research of the past decade in areas such as cognitive science, neurosciences, and organizational theory is making it into American classroom practice, whether at the K-12 level or in colleges and universities. (p. 15)

To solve these problems the Commission recommended:

1. Expanding access and success "...by improving student preparation and persistence...and providing significant increases in aid to low-income students." (p. 17)
2. Restructuring the financial aid system—especially to meet the needs of students from low-income families—and putting into place new incentives to control costs and improve institutional productivity. (pp. 19–20)
3. Changing "...from a system primarily based on reputation to one based on performance..." by creating a "...robust culture of accountability and transparency..." and "...a consumer-friendly information data-base...to enable students, parents, policy makers and others to weigh and rank comparative institutional performance..." including "...more and better information on the quality and cost of higher education...and meaningful student learning outcomes." (pp. 21–24)
4. Embracing "...a culture of continuous innovation and quality improvement by developing new pedagogies, curricula, and technologies to improve learning, particularly in the area of science and math literacy." (p. 25)
5. Developing "...a national strategy of lifelong learning that helps all citizens understand the importance of preparing for and participating in higher education throughout their lives." (p. 26)

6. Ensuring the capacity of colleges and universities "...to achieve global leadership in key strategic areas such as science, engineering, medicine, and other knowledge-intensive professions." (p. 27)

Although the Commission's report was criticized in some quarters for not sufficiently recognizing the diversity of missions within the postsecondary system, it did pretty well describe the problems facing higher education at the time. The recommendation that was most controversial concerned "creating a robust culture of accountability and transparency." It was also the one that probably affected institutional researchers the most. Some institutions began to use standardized student-achievement tests and develop performance-related data, all of which could be used to make comparisons between institutions (Basken, 2007). In late 2006, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges began a joint project to develop a Volunteer System of Accountability® (VSA; http://www.voluntarysystem.org) to help universities "demonstrate accountability and stewardship to the public, measure educational outcomes to identify effective educational practices, and assemble information that is accessible, understandable, and comparable" (University of Texas at Austin, Office of Information Management and Analysis website, www.utexas.edu/academic/ima/accountability). Currently included in VSA's College Portrait are such measures as cost of attendance, graduation rates, degree offerings, student engagement, and core educational outcomes. By mid-2008, more than 235 institutions had joined the network, and over 300 universities currently participate. In mid-2007, the members of the Association of American Universities Data Exchange (a group of institutional researchers who had exchanged enrollment, salary, and cost information for over 30 years; http://aaude.org) agreed to collect and release information about undergraduate student performance and costs. And in late 2007, 600 private institutions agreed to participate in the University and College Accountability Network (U-CAN; http://www.ucan-network.org), sponsored by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU), to present uniform information about their institutions. Currently, more than 800 institutions participate (Ruben, Lewis, & Sandmeyer, 2008, pp. 22–23). The measures included in U-CAN are similar to the VSA College Portrait providing consumer information to students, parents, and policy-makers, although outcomes measures are not required.

IR During the Period

During this period, where the term *accountability* was on the lips of virtually everyone associated with postsecondary education, institutional researchers kept on keeping on. Since they had been involved in the development of most of the measures that were included in various accountability/performance systems, and since they had access to institutional data to produce new measures, it could be argued that this period was almost guaranteed employment for institutional researchers. J. Fredericks Volkwein and Marvin W. Peterson continued to chronicle the evolution of the field.

Because the operational definition of institutional research varies across higher education entities (i.e., campuses, system offices, state coordinating boards, foundations), Volkwein (2008) created the concept of the Golden Triangle of Institutional Research. At the three respective points of his triangle, Volkwein included the activities of (a) institutional research and analysis, (b) planning and budgeting, and (c) assessment, effectiveness, and accreditation, as dominating the practice of IR in America (pp. 6–7). He also reported "a growth in emphasis on accountability and performance, reporting on technology and knowledge management, information systems, outcomes assessment, and studies of persistence and retention" (pp. 8–9). He reiterated the four-category typology of institutional research that he had first developed in the early 1990s, that is, (a) craft structure—the largest category, including small, relatively undeveloped offices that are involved mostly in routine reporting; (b) small adhocracies—slightly larger offices (2–3 staff members) whose workload is highly dependent on where the function is placed in the institution's organizational structure; (c) professional bureaucracies—at institutions where the IR function has been centralized to carry out specialized research projects as well as other duties; and (d) elaborate profusion—most prominent at research universities, where the IR function is dispersed across campus because many administrative leaders demand their own analytical support (pp. 12–14).

In this updated version of his typology description, Volkwein stated that based on his research and experience, he thought that the professional bureaucracy type was the most efficient and effective. This model could be effectively organized by function, including

- External and internal reporting (IPEDS, state reports, accountability reporting),
- Planning and special projects (decision support studies, benchmarking, enrollment and revenue projections),
- Data management and technical support (student, personnel, and financial databases, data warehouse, hardware and software support), and
- Research and development (outcomes assessment, survey research, campus climate research, institutional effectiveness, and alumni studies).

Alternatively, Volkwein stated that the professional bureaucracy IR office could be organized according to its major customers, that is, academic affairs, business/finance, enrollment management, and student affairs, with other staff responsible for data warehousing and technical support (pp. 15–16).

Volkwein (2008) also updated the "four faces" model he had proffered in 1999. His original four faces included the institutional researcher as an information authority, describing the institution; the institutional researcher as policy analyst, analyzing policy alternatives; the institutional researcher as spin doctor, presenting the institution's best case;

and the institutional researcher as scholar/researcher, supplying impartial evidence of institutional effectiveness. To this, he added a fifth face that had been recommended by Serban and Luan, the institutional researcher as knowledge manager, whose purpose is "to gather and transform data into information and knowledge; to collaborate in creating and maintaining information repositories and to facilitate the process of knowledge creation, capture, and sharing" (Volkwein, 2008, p. 18; see also Serban, 2002). Volkwein concluded that the field of institutional research "...is gradually evolving toward a state of greater maturity..." (p. 17) and that it has become "...the guiding light or center of gravity for all of the university's analytical activities—internal and external, formative and summative, administrative and academic" (p. 20).

In 2008 too, Peterson updated his earlier work on the evolution of institutional research. "Clearly IR, as a field of practice, has been responsive to the major institutional management challenges, has developed an accumulation of activities and roles that continue over time and has methods that have become increasingly sophisticated" (2008, p. 21). He returned to his list of "environmental pressures" that shape the Emerging Postsecondary Knowledge Industry, including diversity—access and involvement of not only traditionally underrepresented groups, but also of new minority-serving institutions, professional associations, and political groups; telematics—the intertwined developments in computing, telecommunications and information processing that impact core educational processes, reshape delivery systems, and compete to provide learning opportunities; quality—the "increased press for assessment and accountability for student learning and for all forms of educational performance"; new learning markets—reflecting the demand for occupational upgrading and advanced degrees for older students; economic productivity—the continued press for institutions to contribute to the economic well-being of their service areas through research and service; globalization—the growing array of educational and research ventures in which institutions engage, often facilitated through telematics; and resource constraint—"...the conflict between the need for revenues to maintain quality and to meet the demands for new programs with the realities of rising costs, declining federal and state support, limits on student and family ability to pay and increased competition for private gifts, contracts, and grants" (pp. 23–25). Peterson included in the Emerging Postsecondary Knowledge Industry, in addition to traditional and proprietary postsecondary institutions the following entities: "...corporate and governmental education and training programs; virtual institutions and delivery systems; new institutions for particular populations; some telecommunications, computing, information, and entertainment firms who provide postsecondary education services; and new partnership patterns, joint ventures, and even international arrangements for postsecondary research and teaching" (p. 27). Within this emerging environment, Peterson suggested five institutional research roles that should be carried out by those who identify themselves as IR professionals and/or coordinated with others who have different titles.

1. Coordinating institutional intelligence—involving the contents and adequacy of the institution's database and information systems, being responsible for external reporting, and knowing about all studies done across campus concerning the operation of the institution;
2. Conducting or supporting academic and management studies;
3. Conducting planning studies and supporting the institution's planning function;
4. Conducting or supporting student, faculty and program assessments and evaluations of educational and program quality, student persistence and learning; and
5. Being a postsecondary knowledge industry analyst—a further explanation of the new role he had first recommended in 1999.

This new role would include five activities: (a) monitoring changing patterns in postsecondary learning, delivery, and competition in the institution's service area; (b) monitoring entrepreneurial activities on the institution's periphery that may involve other types of institutions, and may have extensive implications for the institution's core functions; (c) being involved in strategic decision analysis, referring to "...major decisions that are large scale, impact significant portions of the institution and are often not easily reversible" (p. 30); (d) assessing the institution's capacity for dealing with significant change or transformation—requiring not only knowledge of the institution's primary resources (financial, human, physical), but also an understanding of political support, both internal and external, and the readiness of faculty and staff for change; and (e) "keeping up with the emerging postsecondary industry in your region and keeping top management attuned to its implications..." (p. 31).

The Future

So there we have it—50 years of institutional research (or maybe 300 years, depending on how we count) and the way IR fits into American higher education. Where does that leave us? Well, I think we have a pretty good idea of *what institutional research is,* even though we have spent a considerable amount of time pondering that definition. Joe Saupe's 1990 statement is probably the best—"Institutional research is research conducted within an institution of higher education to provide information which supports institutional planning, policy formation and decision making" (p. 1). Certainly, we must allow for the fact that institutional research is sometimes carried out between and among institutions and by people who don't identify themselves as institutional researchers. What confuses us more is that fact that the operational definition of institutional research varies so widely across college and university campuses. Volkwein's typology has helped us understand those differences, and he and others have helped us understand the broad array of activities in which institutional researchers engage—from reporting data and accountability measures to outcomes assessment, from database management to planning studies, from accreditation to whatever question is on the mind of the dean of XYZ college. Mostly, we are involved in the issues that face our institutions. And from crippling budget cuts, looming regulation, and skepticism about the value of a college degree, those issues are challenging indeed these days (Carlson, 2011). And, we know that how we do our jobs is highly related to the state of information technology (or telematics) at any particular time.

We also know *what institutional research isn't*. It isn't research on higher education—or at least it wasn't when institutional researchers essentially left the more theoretical study of colleges and universities to faculty colleagues back in the 1970s and 1980s to concentrate on the practical issues facing our institutions. It can be argued, however, that the pendulum has swung back quite a bit. Although higher education research has often been criticized for not having much practical impact on campus policy, the large and growing body of knowledge concerning how students make their enrollment decisions, the role of financial aid in both matriculation and persistence decisions, and how students become engaged in the institutions at which they enroll has helped on many campuses to influence programs aimed at increasing institutional effectiveness.

Another example of the decreasing gap between institutional research and research on higher education is in the measurement of student learning. When the NCPPHE published their first "Measuring Up State-by-State Report Card on Higher Education" in 2000, a grade of *Incomplete* was given to every state on their ability to measure what students learn in college and provide such information for state-by-state comparisons (NCPPHE, 2000). This same grade was given in the "Measuring Up 2002" report (NCPPHE, 2002). The situation improved slightly in 2004, when five states were reported as having participated in a demonstration project sponsored by the National Forum on College-Level Learning. The Collegiate Learning Assessment was used at participating four-year institutions in this project, and the ACT WorkKeys assessment was used in participating two-year colleges (Miller & Ewell, 2005). In 2006, six additional states reported using a state-level version of the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL; Ewell, 2006). The Spellings Commission on the Future of Higher Education provided impetus for further work in this area by accrediting agencies and institutions, as mentioned previously. In addition to the instruments mentioned above, the Commission's report also specifically mentioned the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The Voluntary System of Accountability recommends that participating institutions use various instruments to assess the reasoning skills of their students, how their students compare with students from other institutions, and how much students learn between their freshman and senior years. (In this regard, it should also be noted that a book released in early 2011 charges that more than a third of college seniors write and synthesize knowledge no better when they are seniors than they did when they were freshmen [*Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses* by Richard Arum & Josipa Roksa]). The point for institutional researchers is that the ability to assess student learning has increased significantly in the last decade or so, principally through the efforts of higher education researchers. The fact that policy-makers have made such measures a part of their accountability demands provides further evidence that the relationship between institutional research and research on higher education will likely strengthen in the future. To be sure, there is work to be done in this area. The "Measuring Up 2008" report continued to give all the states an *Incomplete* grade on learning because benchmarks that provide state-by-state comparisons are still not available. However, the report did mention that institutions are producing such information to demonstrate their accountability (NCPPHE, 2008).

Finally, there are many suggestions as to *what institutional research should be* in order to be most effective. For example over the past 20 years, Terenzini has suggested that we increase our issues and contextual intelligence to go along with our technical and analytical intelligence. In a similar vein, McLaughlin and Howard have suggested that as information professionals, we should endeavor to increase the value and usefulness of the information we provide institutional leaders based on their decision-making styles and our understanding of the problems and issues confronting our institutions. Volkwein has suggested that in addition to being information authorities, we be policy analysts, spin doctors (when necessary and appropriate), scholar/researchers measuring institutional effectiveness, and knowledge managers. Peterson has suggested that as we move from the information society to a knowledge economy, we add the role of postsecondary knowledge industry analyst to our traditional roles of data managers and analysts engaged in management studies, planning support, evaluation, and assessment.

All of these suggestions are valid; they are rational and make perfect sense. There is no doubt that institutional research professionals should play critical roles in the decision-making at their institutions. We should do so because of our understanding of our institutions and the ways our leaders make decisions, because of our skills in analyzing policy alternatives, and because of our abilities in transforming the institution's data into useful information. However, it is disconcerting to learn that so much of the time of so many IR professionals is spent in compliance-related activities (e.g., reporting institutional data to external entities). It is disconcerting to learn that this requirement often reduces the amount of time that many of us can spend being involved in the institution's management and planning processes. It is disconcerting that the information produced by good institutional research is sometimes used inappropriately because of campus politics. The growing emphasis on accountability will likely require that even more time be spent gathering the data necessary to produce new measures to report. This is not to say that data reporting is unimportant or unnecessary. It is to say that in the current postsecondary environment, there are better, more important, and more satisfying ways to contribute to the policy and planning needs of an institution.

After 50 years, institutional research is a mature area of higher education administration. IR offices are typically the center of an institution's analytical activities. IR professionals play a vital role on their campuses—although, too often perhaps, a "backstage" role. There is a great deal of conversation on campuses these days about "data-driven decision-making" and maintaining a "culture of evidence." The basic argument is that higher education leaders should base their decision-making on relevant information. Institutional researchers can help provide that information. They can be more than the data managers and reporters. They have the requisite organizational intelligence. They can provide the analytical support necessary to build that culture of evidence. If they are not seen as providing important support for institutional decision-making and planning, they should be.

No one knows for sure where the next 50 years will take higher education. Will public support continue to erode? Will public and private institutions become more alike? Will totally new types of institutions dot the postsecondary knowledge industrial landscape? Will students and parents be able to afford higher education? Who will pay? Who will benefit? What will information technology look like in 50 years? There will no doubt be changes we cannot even fathom today, and postsecondary education will no doubt change to reflect them. And institutional researchers should be there to provide analytical support as their institutions adapt, change, and transform. Peterson has suggested that IR professionals take on the additional responsibility of monitoring the evolving patterns of postsecondary learning, delivery, and competition. If we can do that effectively and become more involved as strategic institutional decisions are made, the future looks bright. In considering institutional research at the 25th anniversary of AIR, Cameron Fincher hearkened back to a 1960 quote by A. J. Brumbaugh, "To make wise decisions, data that only institutional research can provide are indispensible" (Brumbaugh, 1960, p. 34; Fincher, 1985, p. 34). These are words from the past that remain true today. The challenge for institutional research over the next 50 years will be to continue to produce indispensible information in support of our institutions' strategic decisions, policies, and plans.

Personal Postlude

It was a high honor to be asked to write this chapter and a profound pleasure to do it. I doubt that as a child anyone thinks, "When I grow up, I want to be an institutional researcher." I had never heard of institutional research until 1967 when Tom Mason, one of the early AIR presidents, gave a frustrated graduate student a tour of a part of higher education that became my professional home. I have been a university budget officer, an academic officer, and an executive officer, but I have always considered myself an institutional researcher—and I have always viewed academia and its challenges from the perspective of an institutional researcher. I have likewise felt a connection to the founders and leaders of our profession. Jimmy Doi was my first mentor during my doctoral program. Marv Peterson supervised my doctoral dissertation and has been a close colleague ever since. Don Lelong was my first boss. I met Jim Firnberg and Bill Tetlow at my first AIR Forum in New Orleans in 1970, and we have been close friends ever since. I used to call Jean Chulak my "AIR Mom." Sam Adams, Marilyn McCoy, Don Reichard, Laura Saunders, Deb Teeter, Rich Howard...you get the picture—close friends, all past AIR presidents. To the extent that I have made a contribution to institutional research and to AIR, it has been because of my association with these people and many others.

This chapter reflects the work of many people. But it is based on my interpretation of their efforts and of American higher education over the past 50 years. This chapter is no doubt flawed because I have not attempted to deal with higher education in other countries. A full understanding of institutional research would, of necessity, reflect its contributions in other higher education systems and settings. For that shortcoming and other weaknesses and defects, I accept full responsibility.

At the very beginning of this chapter, I stated that the history of the Association for Institutional Research would be covered in another chapter in this monograph authored by Rich Howard. Obviously, the evolution of AIR has had a major impact on the history of institutional research. That will probably be even more true in the years to come. AIR is at a major juncture in its development as a professional association. With its mission of supporting quality data and decisions for higher education (www.airweb.org), it will continue to be the primary resource for leadership and professional development for institutional researchers wherever they work in postsecondary education.

CHAPTER 3
AIR HISTORY-GOVERNANCE, POLICIES, AND SERVICES—PERSPECTIVES OF PAST PRESIDENTS
1965–2010

Richard Howard

Consultant

In this chapter, the history of AIR is tracked from the perspective of its past presidents. Each of the authors assumed responsibility for a specific time frame and interviewed available past presidents who served during that time. Specifically,

Richard Howard (with Bill Lasher), 1965–1979;

Donald Reichard, 1980–1989;

Mary Sapp, 1990–1999;

Dawn Geronimo Terkla, 2000–2007; and,

Fred Lillibridge, 2008–2010.

Our intent was to identify events that impacted the Association, its policies and practices, the nature of the Association's role in support of its members' professional development, and to explore the personal insights of the past leaders about their time as both leaders of the Association and practicing institutional researchers and scholars.

The story told in this chapter documents the history of the Association through the reflections of AIR's past presidents. As coordinator of this chapter, I provided the other authors with a general outline of some topics to be covered in their interviews. They were then free to let the interviewees talk about any other issues and events that they felt were significant during their time on the Executive Committee. And, while the conversations were often long, as Dawn Terkla observed, memories have tended to fade. Each author then described the history of the Association within his/her specific time period, reflecting the substance of the conversations each had with colleagues. There was no attempt to standardize the writing styles or presentation formats across the time periods. The intent was to reflect not only the Association's growth and development, but also to reinforce the fact that while the Association's leaders have brought different styles of leadership to the Association, all have had the single-minded intent of supporting those who conduct institutional research on their campuses.

We want to thank the past presidents with whom we were able to speak for their willingness to share their memories and knowledge about the Association and its continuous relevance to its members, the profession of institutional research, and higher education. We hope that you enjoy this “history” as much as we enjoyed talking with friends and colleagues.

As part of this project, several of us identified those individuals who have served the Association in elected positions. Our intent in putting this information together was to recognize those who have served the Association and preserve the history of its leadership. The history of elected members of the Association can be found in the About Us section of the AIR website. In posting this portion of the Association’s history, we hope that it can be updated each year and maintained by the Central Office.

1965–1979

Richard D. Howard

Consultant

As outlined by L. Joseph Lins in the 1966 Forum proceedings, the original AIR Constitution was adopted by those at the Stony Brook National Forum in 1965. This constitution provided the framework for the governance of the Association until 1976, when a revised Constitution was adopted. With the exception of the positions of Forum Chair and Associate Forum Chair, both Constitutions called for the structure of the Executive Committee as of March, 2011: President, Vice President, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, and four Members-at-Large. As the Association expanded its membership, processes and procedures were modified to meet the expanding needs of the members. In general, the first 15 years of the Association's growth revolved around building organizational structure and implementing processes to facilitate member networking.

To track the history of the Association for the first 15 years of its existence (1965–1979), several sources of information were used. The primary source was those past presidents from this time period that we could find. The authors interviewed Jim Montgomery (AIR President, 1966–67), Joe Saupe (1968–69), Don Lelong (1973–74), Bernie Sheehan (1975–76), Jim Firnberg (1976–77), and Bob Wallhaus (1978–79). Obviously, we were limited by not being able to talk with some members of "The Good 'Ole Boys and Girl Club" (as the presidents from this time period were affectionately known). In addition, information about the era came from meeting minutes and letters that reflected Association business, as well as from conversations with other members of the Association during that time period. The description of this time period in the history of the Association that follows is not presented sequentially or by president, but rather according to the topics or themes that surfaced as these past presidents were interviewed.

Executive Committee Structure and Responsibilities

The current structure of the Association grew from an initial organization that was held together largely by individuals with an interest in the emerging field of institutional research and with significant support from their institutions. In general, as Bob Wallhaus indicated, the Association's primary role was that of facilitating networking among the members with the annual Forum bringing them together. And, for the most part, it appears that the operational activities associated with keeping the Association viable were the primary focus of the officers. Those interviewed indicated that there was little effort given to strategic issues or planning, professional development, or the development of affiliated institutional research groups—all directions that became important during following decades.

As indicated above, the Constitution adopted in 1965 identified the officers of the Executive Committee much as they exist today with the exception of the Forum Chair and Associate Chair positions. The Vice President had responsibility for planning the Forum. Each of the Member-at-Large positions was for a term of two years, with the President assigning specific responsibilities to newly elected Members-at-Large each year. During its first decade, the Association grew in size, complexity, and offerings. As such, in 1976 a revised Constitution and Bylaws were adopted by the members attending the Forum in Los Angeles, CA. In general, changes to the Constitution formalized many practices that had been adopted over the previous decade.

Initially, there was no central support, and all functions of the Association were carried out by volunteers elected to the Executive Committee. As all those that were interviewed indicated, their institutions provided significant support for their efforts. As Vice President, and responsible for planning the Forum, Don Lelong indicated that one of his staff members at the University of Michigan worked some 1,500 hours on the Vancouver Forum in 1973. At this time, the officers' institutions supported all travel costs to attend Executive Committee meetings as well as the Forum. In general, the records of the Association followed elected officers from institution to institution. This changed with the creation of the AIR Central Office in Tallahassee, FL and with the hiring of Jean Chulak as Executive Secretary (see below).

Nomination Committee. The 1965 Constitution called for the existing Executive Committee to create a single slate of nominees to be voted on at the Forum. At the 1965 Forum in Stony Brook, NY, Joe Saupe reported that there was discussion and objections raised to this process; however, the Executive Committee's role in putting forth a slate of candidates continued. At the Chicago meeting in 1969, a group charged that the Executive Committee was perpetuating itself and proposed a second slate of candidates—none of whom were elected. During the next few years, the nominating process evolved to a double slate of candidates created by the Executive Committee.

In July 1974, Jack Rossmann was asked by President Don Lelong to chair an ad hoc committee to review nomination procedures and make recommendations for criteria to assess the qualifications of nominees for officer and other executive committee positions and to develop procedures to ensure that well-qualified people were identified and brought to the attention of the Executive Committee. The Committee's report was submitted to President Lois Torrence (1974–75) at the following fall's Executive Committee meeting, and the work of this Committee was accepted and included in the revised Constitution in 1976.

Membership

In the early years, NIRF attendance was by invitation only. (See Lasher's chapter in this volume for more discussion about the issue.) With the adoption of the Constitution in 1965, there were two primary membership categories:

> Full Member: A person *actively engaged* in institutional research (defined as *research leading to improved understanding, planning, and operation of colleges and universities*), a person whose responsibility includes designing, conducting, and interpreting such research.
>
> Associate Member: A person interested in the methodology and the results of institutional research who is *not actively engaged* in such research.

In John Stecklein's survey of charter members of the Association in 1966, 382 people were active members from January 1 to June 30, 1966. Using data gleaned from membership applications, Stecklein profiled the charter membership, which included 293 full members and 89 associate members. The associate members, for the most part, held administrative or research positions on campuses or were employed in state, regional, or federal agencies. For all 382 charter members, 86% worked at colleges or universities, 60% held academic rank, and 90% were male.

In 1970, Wilbur Tincher from Auburn University, in his role as Secretary of the Association, profiled the membership again using data from 669 member applications, an increase of 132% from the charter membership some five years earlier. In this survey, there were 526 full members and 132 associate members: 84.2% of the members worked at colleges and universities and 55.4% held faculty rank. Female membership was still at about 10%.

Initially, the determination of one's membership status was based on the proportion of an individual's responsibilities involved in campus-based institutional research. On the application, the applicant was asked to indicate how much of his/her time was spent conducting institutional research in relation to other activities (see Appendix B). Several interviewed past presidents indicated that, at the time of their initial application, they were not sure if they would be accepted as full members as, at their institutions, they held other titles in addition to one with the phrase *institutional research*. During this time, there was a great deal of discussion around the notion of associate member for those not directly involved in campus-based institutional research, as many thought that this reflected "second class" status.

These membership categories were replaced with the adoption of the revised Constitution in 1976 when membership was defined in Article III, Section 2 as follows.

> *There shall be the following categories of individual membership: regular membership, graduate student membership, emeritus membership, and distinguished*

membership. Review of and action on applications for membership shall be the responsibility of the Secretary.

This did away with the categories of full member and associate member. Further, in Section 3, regular membership was eligible to anyone:

> *....actively engaged in research leading to the improved understanding, planning, and operation of institutions of postsecondary education; or...interested in the methodology and results of institutional research.*

As such, the category of associate member was eliminated, and individuals with an interest in institutional research, its methodologies and uses, were eligible for regular membership regardless of their place of employment.

Awards. The Association has from its beginnings sought to recognize those individuals who made important contributions both in service to the Association and the profession of institutional research. During the first 15 years, the Association created three awards to recognize three different types of member contributions, and these three awards continue to be made today. Distinguished Member status is awarded to those persons who have made significant and substantial contributions to the field of institutional research. The first to receive this membership status, awarded in 1966, were A. J. Brumbaugh and John Dale Russell for their early work in defining the profession. These two individuals were recognized as "Deans" of institutional research at the 1962 NIRF meeting in Chicago. This recognition reflected the importance of their contributions to the developing profession of institutional research and the new Association. Others receiving this award during the 1970s included Charles E. Howell, Elmer West, John Stecklein, and Paul L. Dressel.

The **Outstanding Service Award** was created to recognize individuals who had made extraordinary and substantive contributions to the Association. The award was first made in 1979 to Charles Brown, Fayetteville State University, and Gustav Froehlich, University of Illinois**.** Froehlich was a charter member of the Association. From the late 1960s to attendance at his last Forum in Seattle in 1999, Brown made many notable contributions to the Association ranging from service on the Executive Committee to playing a key role in the establishment of the Traditionally Black Colleges and Universities (TCBCU) Special Interest Group and the North Carolina Association for Institutional Research. For a complete listing of the recipients of these awards, see www.airweb.org.

The **Forum's Best Paper Award** (or Charles F. Elton Best Paper Award) was initiated in 1977, with the first award recognizing the work of Charles D. Salley, Georgia State University. In the next two years, the award was presented to James E. Prather, Glynton Smith, and Janet E. Kodras (1978) and to Alan C. Bare in 1979. For a complete listing of the recipients of these awards, see www.airweb.org.

Establishing the AIR Central Office

At the 1973 Forum in Vancouver, the Executive Committee charged a Subcommittee on Site Selection for AIR Headquarters with soliciting applications to house the headquarters of the Association. In April 1974, in a letter to the Executive Committee, Warren Gulko, Chairman of the Subcommittee, reported that the Committee had reviewed the applications from five universities and recommended that the AIR Central Office be located at the Florida State University (FSU). He also reported that negotiations were underway with the University.

At the 1991 Forum, as part of her final annual report, Jean Chulak recounted that when hired in 1974 as the Association's Administrative Director, she shared an office with Craig Johnson (a faculty member at FSU who served as liaison to the Association) for the first decade or so. The Florida State Board of Regents provided a $5,000 grant to the Association to support relocation of its records and to purchase some furnishings. While there was graduate student support for the Administrative Director from the beginning, the first staff member was hired in 1976–to fill a part-time clerical position. This position became full-time in 1978. In the early 1980s, two additional positions were created to support the increased workload.

Forum

Structure and Governance. During this time period, all aspects of putting on the Forum were the responsibility of volunteers, led by the Vice President. The Vice President worked closely with a Local Arrangements Committee, a group who handled logistics associated with the meeting site and other conference-related matters. This included creating the "Call for Papers," negotiating contracts with the hotels, putting the program together, identifying and inviting keynote speakers, and communicating with presenters. With Jean Chulak's hiring in 1974, support to the Vice President and Local Arrangements from the Central Office began and became central to putting on the Forum. However, even with growing support from the Central Office, it was clear that the responsibility for planning and organizing the Forum had expanded to the point where it was too much for the Vice President, given the other responsibilities of the Office. As such, in 1980, the positions of Forum Chair and Associate Forum Chair were created with Robert Fenske serving as the first Forum Chair and John Chase as the first Associate Forum Chair and Chair in 1981. These two positions became components of the Executive Committee.

For the first two NIRF, conference presentations were invited by the conference planning committee. Beginning with the third NIRF (1963), there was a call for papers as well as invited speakers, and some 16 individuals responded to the call. Through this process, Sidney Suslow presented his classic work on the Induced Course Load Matrix (ICLM). The call for papers soon became the primary source of Forum program content, as it remains today.

First Presidential Speech. A tradition began when John Stecklein presented his view of the profession and its future at the 1966 Forum. (Every past president interviewed mentioned that Stecklein misplaced a page in his speech as he was presenting it.) While Tom Mason (1969–70) wrote and published a speech, he was the only president not to present it during the Forum. Presidential speeches were discontinued in the mid-1980s. Reading the Presidential Speeches provides insight into the issues that institutions of higher education were facing at the time, and these speeches reflect the thinking about future trends in higher education and the role that IR could and should play in supporting planning and decision-making at the campus level. It is clear that the early leaders of AIR not only were the political leaders of our profession, but they were also leaders in thought and ideas about higher education and the future of institutional research.

Initially, the Local Arrangements Committee held a small reception for invited speakers and other invited guests. These receptions were typically funded by the Local Arrangements Committee members' institutions. In 1976, (Los Angeles Forum) Jim Firnberg, AIR Vice President and Forum Chair, received funds from SCT President Freddy Gross to host the reception. Jim and others purchased refreshments and food, and the reception was a success. Later, there were complaints to both Gross and Firnberg by individuals who were not invited; and, the hotel staff became aware of the "event" and made it clear that receptions were to be catered by the hotel. As a result, Gross agreed to fund a reception for all attendees to be catered by the hotel the following year in Montreal. After this, the reception became a Sunday evening event following the keynote speech, and funding for the reception was factored into the Forum fee structure.

Publications

Forum Proceedings. First produced by L. Joseph Lins, University of Wisconsin, after the 1963 Forum, the proceedings contained all invited presentations, the President's speech, and concurrent presentations. The proceedings were published annually until the early 1980s.

Publications Board and New Directions for Institutional Research. The creation of the Publications Board and the *New Directions for Institutional Research* series came about at the same time. In December, 1970, President Suslow created an ad hoc AIR Committee on Publications and charged them to explore the feasibility of creating a periodic publication to address issues related to institutional research. The members were Robert Clark (Chair), Robert Cope, Robert Cyphers, Robert Fenske, James Firnberg, Sidney Suslow, and Emerson Tully. The Committee explored various options, with some arguing for the publication of a journal, while others felt the Association was not mature enough at that time to support a journal. According to Jim Firnberg, the "Vancouver–Berkeley Axis" (Clark and Suslow) prevailed, and at the 1972 Forum in Miami Beach, the Committee presented the following resolution which the Executive Committee approved.

> *The Association approves of a policy of sponsoring a series of monographs on major topics in institutional research, and authorizes the Executive of the Association to provide, if necessary, a subsidy of up to $20,000 over a period from May 1, 1972, to June 30, 1974 for this purpose.*

To manage the creation of a monograph series as well as support the Association's other publications, the Executive Committee formed the Publications Board. President Joe Sutton's charge to the new Publications Board was "to give direction and supervision to the publications activities of the Association." At this time, Sutton also appointed Member-at-Large Bernie Sheehan as the Board's Chair. During the next year, the new Board focused on organizing itself and establishing the monograph series. At the 1973 Forum, Chairman Sheehan's annual report of the Publications Board defined the membership and structure of the Publications Board. The membership included those without editorial responsibilities as well as the editors of the publications of the Association at that time (i.e., *AIR Newsletter,* Forum proceedings, and the monograph series). While expanded to meet the publication activity of today, the current Publication Committee (the successor of the Publications Board) is made up of Association members with the same types of responsibilities.

In the 1973 Publications Board Annual Report, Sheehan also described the work of the Board members in the development of the Monograph series. Editor-in-Chief Sid Suslow and Associate Editor Paul Jedamus brought a recommendation forward that the Association enter into a two-year agreement with Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers to publish the monograph. The agreement called for the publication of four monographs each year and would be the fourth quarterly *New Directions* monograph series, titled *New Directions for Institutional Research*, with the first edition to be published in April 1974. In the 1974 Annual Report of the Publications Board, Sheehan indicated that the first monograph in the *New Directions for Institutional Research,* "Accountability in Higher Education," had been published—and a monograph series for the Association was a reality.

Publications have been recognized as an important component of the Association since its early years. In addition to the *New Directions for Institutional Research* series, the Association either published or supported the following periodic publications during the first 15 years of its existence.

AIR Newsletter. The first *AIR Newsletter* was developed and distributed to the membership by Stewart Grout during 1964–65 as he planned the 1965 Forum in Stony Brook, NY. During the first year of the Association, Vice President Jim Montgomery published two newsletters, in part to advertise the upcoming Boston Forum in 1966. As President in 1966–67, Jim Montgomery appointed Clarence Bagley as the *AIR Newsletter* Editor. The *AIR Newsletter* has been published continuously since 1964.

Membership Directory. The membership directory was published almost every year from 1976–77 until the mid-1990s when members were given access to an online directory maintained at the AIR office. Developed by the Central Office under the general direction of the Publications Board, the directories not only contained a comprehensive list of all members but also included lists of past presidents, distinguished members, members of all standing committees, and other relevant information.

Research in Higher Education (RHE). The *Research in Higher Education* journal formally became affiliated with the Association in 1977–78 during Warren Gulko's presidency. Chuck Elton, the first editor of the journal, became an *Ex-officio* member of the Publications Board. Cameron Fincher, Associate Editor of RHE initiated the Between Forums series in 1978. In this series, he and other institutional researchers published 3–5 page papers addressing various topics related to higher education in each edition of the Journal.

Professional File. Under the organizational direction of the Publications Committee, the *Professional File* was initiated in 1978 with a paper authored by J. W. Ridge titled, "Organizing for Institutional Research." Richard Perry served as the first editor of the series. Papers initially were distributed by mail with the *AIR Newsletter*. Today, all *Professional File* publications can be accessed from the AIR website at www.airweb.org.

Other IR Monographs (Initial RIR Publications). In the early years of the Association, there was not a formal monograph production function. However, there were several AIR publications that were developed by members that reflected the state of the profession at the time they were written. The first of these, *Memo to a Newcomer to the Field of Institutional Research,* written by Joe Saupe was published by AIR in 1967. In 1970, Joe Saupe and Jim Montgomery wrote *The Nature and Role of Institutional Research: Memo to a College or University*. At a conference sponsored by ESSO (now Exxon-Mobil) in 1972, Sidney Suslow presented a paper titled, "A Declaration on Institutional Research." In 1976, AIR published a monograph by John Lyons titled, *Memorandum to a Newcomer to the Field of Institutional Research*. The last three of these publications can be found on the AIR website in the Publications Section at www.airweb.org.

Affiliation with AIR

It was not until the mid-1970s that regional institutional research organizations began to form both nationally and internationally (although there were a number of regional conferences held during the 1960s and 1970s). The 1976 Revised Constitution and Bylaws outlined criteria and a process for institutional research organizations to become affiliated with the Association. AIR, seeking to encourage the growth of regional and state organizations established an Affiliated Groups Committee in 1978–79. Two years later in the *AIR Directory*, 13 state and regional groups and two community college organizations were listed as affiliated with the Association.

In 1973, an Exchange Program Committee, initially chaired by Eliot Higbee was created. In 1974, about 10 representatives from the Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation of OECD in Paris attended the Washington, DC Forum. In part, they were given some travel assistance by AIR. In January 1975, about 10 AIR members received small travel grants to attend the second general conference of the Programme in Paris. Bernie Sheehan gave the "Association's" paper addressing the major problems that were the subject of institutional research in North America. Other members representing AIR at this meeting included George Beatty, James Counelis, Larry Litten, Gloria Scott, John Stecklein, Clifford Steward, Bill Tetlow, Mantha Vlahos, and Ed Jordan. IMHE members also attended the St. Louis Forum in 1975. These initial exchanges were the beginnings of an international focus of the Association that is discussed later in both Don Reichard and Mary Sapp's sections of this chapter.

Professional Development

While the early National Institutional Research Forums seemed to be about the identification and definition of the emerging field of institutional research, the founding of the Association for Institutional Research was, in large part, about providing opportunities for the professional development of its members. The Forum served as the primary venue for networking and the exchange of ideas, processes, and methodologies. There were, however, a number of workshops delivered in the late 1960s that were important in introducing this new field to practitioners. Three in particular were mentioned by the past presidents: (a) 1966, University of Texas, sponsored by the Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB) and AIR; (b) 1968, Baton Rouge, sponsored by AIR and SREB; and, (c) 1968, Minneapolis, sponsored by Institutional Research Council of Eleven (IRCE) and AIR. The workshops at Baton Rouge and Minneapolis were funded, in part, through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to John Stecklein at the University of Minnesota.

The Professional Development Services (PDS) Committee was formally defined in the 1976 *AIR Directory*, and Craig Johnson was named its first Chair. The primary function of the Committee at this point was to coordinate the pre-Forum workshops, which had expanded in number since the first offerings at the 1974 Forum in Washington, DC.

Data Policy

There was discussion among the early members of the Association about whether AIR should have a role or official voice in defining the data reporting requirements of National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) or any other Federal agency. The issue was that

AIR was a member organization, organized to facilitate the exchange of ideas among institutional researchers and those interested in institutional research. Many felt that there should not be an official role for the Association in discussions about data and reporting requirements of federal, state, and regional agencies. There were, however, some early members who did visit with representatives from American Council on Education and, as professionals involved in institutional research, served on panels and review boards for NCES. Their participation was not as AIR representatives, but as individuals. It is not clear if these interactions had major impact on national data policy or Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) reporting. The 1976 *AIR Directory* identifies the existence of a Data Policy Committee chaired by Edith Carter, Member-at-Large; however, no activities or committee members were identified.

Summary

The Association for Institutional Research began, I suspect, like many other professional organizations, when a group of individuals came together to discuss an emerging interest, in this case, the study of the operations and outcomes of postsecondary education—institutional research. Conversations with some of the charter members of AIR make it clear that the Association we know today was founded on the professional interests and initiatives of individuals, with significant administrative and financial support from their institutions. During the first 15 years of AIR's existence, structures, processes, and governing policies were developed and modified to reflect the needs and desires of members. Much of what was put in place with the adoption of the revised Constitution in 1976 has provided the fundamental framework for the Association's governance structure, policies, and procedures for the past 40 years.

On a personal note, I joined AIR in 1976, when I took my first full-time position in the Office of Institutional Research at West Virginia University. In 1978, I attended my first Forum in Houston and began attending meetings of the Southern University Group of 25 (SUG-25). During my early years, I had the good fortune of meeting and interacting with many of the charter members of the Association. Without exception I always felt accepted as a colleague and friend. There has always been a willingness to provide advice and support about office issues or career choices regardless of who is asked or who does the asking.

In addition to professional respect, these early leaders enjoyed each other's company. I learned early that regardless of how late the social activities may have lasted, you were expected to be at the meeting the next morning ready to contribute. And, at times, the socials lasted well past midnight. This "play and work ethic" I believe resulted not only in the development of many lasting friendships, but was significant in the creation of an organizational structure and processes that have served the Association and its members well for the past 45 years.

1980–1989

Don Reichard

Emory & Henry College

The 1980s would see (a) a concern for internationalizing the Association, which would not play itself out fully until the mid-1990s, when a federated model of international, regional, and state-affiliated associations was adopted; (b) a vast formation, expansion, and affiliation of state and regional institutional research associations within the United States; (c) a series of planning exercises and agenda-setting meetings that continued through the decade involving joint meetings of the Executive Committee, Publications Board, and Professional Development Services Board, which translated the recommendations of the Commission to Reassess the Purposes and Objectives of the Association into action plans; (d) a revitalized commitment to serving the professional development needs of an expanded membership, which would include members who were not lodged solely within formally designated offices of institutional research; and, (e) a strengthened presence and participation on the part of individual members and the Association as a resource in data policy, assessment, and accreditation processes.

Internationalization

The first AIR Forum, held in Chicago in 1961, had 46 attendees, all from the United States. As shown in Table 3.2, through the years, international (non-U.S.) members increased from 51 in 1972–73 (5.3%) of the total membership to 259 (14.7%) of the membership in 1980–81. By 1989, non-U.S. membership had increased in number to 314, but had declined slightly to 13.1%. By 1999, non-U.S. membership had declined to 228 members (125 Canadian) and 103 from Other Countries, or 7.4% of the total membership. The declines in AIR membership from outside the United States were due primarily to the establishment of viable AIR affiliated groups all over the world.

A number of committees with various names have explored the most appropriate means for “encouraging a network of international persons interested in institutional research and making recommendations designed to increase the Association’s involvement, activity, and assistance to the field of institutional research outside of North America” and “enhancing international emphasis within Association programs and services.” The Committee of Correspondents which had existed in 1980–81 became the International Liaison Committee in 1982–83 and was renamed the International Development Committee in 1983–84. The Fall 1989 *AIR Newsletter* detailed a proposed Amendment to add a 12th position—that of an International Development Committee (IDC) Chair to the

Executive Committee. The changes in the Constitution approved in 1990–91 were intended to internationalize the Association's program offerings and membership over the years.

Thaly Nilsson, Vice President for Public Relations at the University of Uppsala, Sweden was elected as the first IDC Chair to a Member-at-Large position for the period 1991–93. Nilsson, who had previously served a two-year term as a Member-at-Large from 1986–88, found it necessary to resign and was succeeded as International Development Chair by Hans Acherman, Head of Personnel at the University of Amsterdam, for the remainder of Nilsson's term. Acherman was subsequently elected to serve another complete term as IDC Chair through the 1996 Forum in Albuquerque.

Constitutional changes approved by the membership in a 1993–94 ballot, which took place after the 1995 Forum in Boston, meant that the IDC Chair no longer served as a member of the newly adopted 11-member Board of Directors. The International Development and Associated Groups Committees were reorganized under the umbrella of a newly created External Relations Committee reporting to the elected Secretary of the Association. Under this arrangement, a federation of institutional research organizations emerged, and the Executive Committee was reorganized as an 11-member Board of Directors in which Members-at-Large were replaced by elected Chairs of Standing Committees including Publications, Membership, Higher Education Data Policy, and Professional Development. The *1994–95 AIR Directory* was retitled, *The World Directory of Institutional Research,* as it included membership information for AIR, the Australasian AIR, and European AIR. Under the reorganization, a new federation of international organizations came into place which would, in time, come to include AIR, Australasian AIR, Canadian Institutional Researchers and Planning Association, European AIR, Higher Education Research and Policy Network (HERPNET) in Africa, Middle East North Africa AIR (MENA-AIR), Southern Africa Association for Institutional Research (SAAIR), and the South East Asian Association for Institutional Research (SEAAIR). (See Summer 1993 *AIR Newsletter.*)

Growth of Regional and State AIR Affiliated Associations

The establishment of state and regional groups often took on the aura of missionary work on the part of AIR leaders. At issue was a sorting out of the possible complementary and competing relationships between membership in state and regional groups and AIR and the desire of most groups to maintain their own autonomy and identity. The route to AIR membership often started with membership in a state-affiliated group. As individuals became committed to institutional research-related careers, membership in AIR as well as regional and state affiliated groups often followed.

Suzanne Larsen, the Member-at-Large assigned responsibility as Chair of the Committee for Regional and Special Interest Groups, reported at the Minneapolis Forum that in the year 1980–81, the Association for Institutional Research for the Upper Midwest (AIRUM), Colorado Association for Planning and Institutional Research (CAPIR), and Pacific Northwest Association for Institutional Research and Planning (PNAIRP) had requested affiliation with AIR. This brought the number of geographically based affiliated regional groups to five, including the previously affiliated North East AIR (NEAIR), Southern Association for Institutional Research (SAIR), and Rocky Mountain AIR (RMAIR).

The *1981–82 AIR Directory* (pp. 134–35) was the first *Directory* to list formally affiliated groups and contact persons for each group. Five regional interest groups were noted along with seven state AIR-affiliated groups, which also included groups in California, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia established in the 1970s. Support for the above groups took the form primarily of providing meeting times and places at the Forum as well as modest support of up to $250 for keynote or workshop speakers at state or regional meetings.

By the end of the 1980s, AIR had begun to supply matching travel grants to assist in meeting the travel costs of nine individuals to the 1990 Louisville Forum. Associated Groups Chair Tony Williams reported at the 1989–90 Annual Business Meeting in Louisville that three new groups had requested formal affiliation with AIR in 1989–90, including Australasian AIR (AAIR), Traditional Black Colleges and Universities (TCBCU), and Connecticut AIR (ConnAIR). As of the 1990 annual meeting, the *1991–92 AIR Directory* listed 28 groups that had affiliated with AIR, including one international group (Australasian); six U.S. regional groups with the addition of the Mid-America Association for Institutional Research (MIDAIR); and 21 state-based groups. In the 1980s alone, 14 AIR affiliated state groups were added including state organizations in Alabama, Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Ohio, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, New York, Tennessee, and Utah.

Planning/Agenda Setting

Long-Range Planning Committees had existed in the Association since the 1970s. However, the 1980s were marked by an array of strategic planning activities that would position the Association so it could chart its course and think creatively about transitioning itself into the 1990s when a new Executive Director would be selected and significant governance and structural changes would emerge.

In September 1982, as one of the first major planning efforts since the establishment of the AIR Central Office in Tallahassee in 1974, Bill Lasher, President in 1982–83 and Sam Adams, President in 1983–84, appointed a 12-member Ad Hoc Commission to Reassess the Purposes and Objectives of the Association, chaired by Don Reichard. The Commission carried out its work over an 18-month period and submitted its report to the Executive Committee in March, 1984. (See *1984–85 AIR Directory*, pp. 16–39, for the Final Report.) The period in which the Commission carried out its work corresponded to an unprecedented period of two successive years of decline in AIR membership, from 1,869 members in 1981–82 to 1,627 members in 1982–83, and to 1,544 members in 1983–84. Broadly speaking, the Commission was asked to consider (a) if the purposes of the Association should be changed; (b) if the Association's name should be changed; (c) steps which should be taken for AIR to become more visible to individuals who are not called *institutional researchers* but who are actually doing institutional research; and (d) the role that institutional research should play in the higher education environment of the 1980s and 1990s. Among its 10 recommendations, the Commission called for the Association to (a) develop structures for encouraging political, administrative, accrediting, and research organizations to utilize institutional research policy research and analysis techniques through the expertise of the Association and its membership; (b) to consider the addition of some form of institutional membership; and (c) perhaps most importantly, to formally add a fourth item to the statement of purposes which would place an expanded emphasis and proactive role upon the delivery of professional development services year-round as a primary purpose of the Association.

Marv Peterson's Annual Report of the President (*1985–86 AIR Directory*, pp. 9–14) given at the 1985 Annual Business Meeting in Portland and Reichard's Report of the Vice President at the 1986 Business Meeting (*1986–87 AIR Directory,* pp. 53–60) detailed the follow-up actions taken by the Executive Committee over the next two years. While the Commission did not recommend a change in the name of the Association, the phrase "for Management Research, Policy Analysis, and Planning" was added to the logo in order to reflect the broader definition of institutional research envisioned in the Commission's report. The concept of an institutional membership was approved by a Constitutional Amendment in the fall of 1985. Details for an institutional membership option were provided in the Fall 1986 *AIR Newsletter*. When the institutional membership option became available for the 1987–88 membership year, beginning in July 1987, this option was selected by 69 organizational members from 39 institutions. Two years later, in 1989–90, there were 118 organizational memberships from 67 institutions (*1992–93 AIR Directory,* p. 42). The most recent information available on the AIR website indicated the presence of 410 institutional memberships from 240 institutions in 2007–08.

Just as Presidents Lasher and Adams partnered in a two-year process in sponsoring the work of the Commission to Reassess the Purposes of the Association, Marv Peterson and Marilyn McCoy, Presidents in 1984–85 and 1985–86, initiated an agenda-setting process for the Association. Keyed by a survey of AIR membership and opinion leaders in higher education, the Executive Committee sought broader input in its deliberations by holding joint meetings, which also included members of the Publications Board and Professional Development Services Board. The meetings served to further define priorities for the year and were continued throughout the decade of the 1980s. The key to the plan was defining IR as a process that involved not only those with formally defined

IR responsibilities. Peterson reflected, "By focusing on the process, we expanded the definition of potential members (or at least made them welcome) to include student affairs researchers, assessment researchers, and academic program and curriculum evaluators (expanding the heavy focus on space analysts, financial analysts and traditional management related IR workers.) In effect, we opened the doors to the academic and student side of the house just as the movement was gaining speed nationally in the mid 1980s with the start of the assessment movement." Peterson's term as President coincided with the 25th Anniversary Forum in Portland and also led to a publication he coauthored with Mary Corcoran entitled *Institutional Research in Transition,* which appeared in 1985 as volume 46 in the *New Directions for Institutional Research* series. Formal agenda-setting meetings with the Publication Board and Professional Development Services Board would continue throughout the latter part of the 1980s.

In his term as President, Don Reichard (1986–87) emphasized the importance of assessment, accreditation, and institutional effectiveness with the hope that AIR members would become involved to the degree "that AIR might become *the* professional organization where the most productive dialogues would take place with regard to such processes." In her term as President, Laura Saunders (1987–88), addressed concerns of representation in the Association's activities, strengthened the emphasis upon multi-year financial and program planning, and met with elected officers of other professional associations to exchange ideas, program materials, and other items of mutual interest. President Deb Teeter (1988–89) emphasized "demystifying the process of involvement" recommended by the Committee on Representation, continued efforts to determine what it meant for AIR to be an international association, worked toward institutionalization of the Data Advisory Committee, and expanded professional development opportunities, especially between Forums.

President Gerry McLaughlin (1989–90) was faced with the daunting task of beginning the complex process for selecting a successor to Jean Chulak. He appointed a Transition Committee, chaired by Immediate Past President Deb Teeter, which included James W. Firnberg, Robert F. Grose, Laura E. Saunders, and Bernard S. Sheehan, assisted by J. Kent Caruthers as a consultant. The Committee was asked to (a) examine the role of the Central Office; (b) consider any major shifts in the character of the Association; (c) evaluate alternative models for operation of the executive function; (d) evaluate the current location; and (e) develop a transition plan for consideration of the Executive Committee during 1989–90. An important component of the committee's work was a review conducted of Central Office structure and operations by Kent Caruthers and consultants from MGT of America, Inc. (see *1990–91 AIR Directory*, pp. 44–46). Key findings included the following.

- The Association may have an image problem because of a lack of awareness of AIR's role.

- External agencies were concerned about continuity of contact with AIR representatives.
- The *AIR Newsletter* needed to be shared more broadly with the higher education community.
- The time available to members to participate in AIR was dwindling.
- An institutional research professional voice would be needed from the Central Office.

The work of the Transition Committee and Executive Committee begun under the leadership of McLaughlin and Teeter would lead to the broad scale restructuring of the Association's organization and governance structures in the 1990s.

Professional Development Services

A new Professional Development Services Committee was formed in 1976–77 and continued through the 1970s, chaired by Members-at-Large Craig Johnson and Jack Rossmann. At the start of the decade in 1980–81, Member-at-Large Don Reichard served as Chair of the Workshops Committee, charged with developing/recommending policies, standards, and procedures for AIR-sponsored workshops. In 1981–82, following the development of Terms of Reference, the title of Workshops Committee was changed to Professional Development Services (PDS) Board. Like the Publications Board, the PDS Board became a semi-independent constitutional entity charged with "providing direction and supervision in meeting the professional development and continuing education needs of members of the Association."

Workshops offered before the opening of the Forum carrying a modest fee of $10 had long been a part of the annual Forum proposal solicitation process. The PDS Board was now charged with seeking out or developing extended workshops that might be offered as pre- or post-Forum activities, or at separate venues between Forums. Such Professional Development Opportunities (PDOs) carried a higher, separate registration fee and could use transportable materials developed by third parties. A case in point was the Critical Strategies for IR workshop materials developed by Bill Tetlow and John Chase, which had been offered at the meetings at various Canadian and regional meeting sites in the United States as well as at several AIR Forums in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Two of the model participants were Andy I. Russell and Andrea I. Russell!! The PDS Board developed a policy for the payment of royalties for use of the Tetlow-Chase materials by other presenters who utilized their materials in workshops for newcomers.

Four post-Forum Professional Development Opportunities (PDOs) offered in a workshop format requiring a more substantial fee debuted at the 1981 Minneapolis Forum. In addition to the regular array of workshops solicited through the proposal process which continued to be offered, three pre-Forum PDOs were offered at the 1982 Forum in Denver under guidelines developed by the PDS Board. Payments of honoraria for pre- or post-Forum PDOs requiring a separate fee were now permitted. Payments of $100 honoraria were also approved for the regular Forum workshops, beginning at the 1985 Forum in Portland. PDOs were generally solicited or contracted by the PDS Board and were offered throughout the decade. The PDS Board's original budgets for 1981–82 and 1989–90 were $5,000 and $18,092, respectively.

Major Professional Development Needs Surveys were conducted under the auspices of the PDS Board in 1980–81 and in 1987–88. Due, in large part, to overlapping membership in the leadership of AIR and the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP), joint AIR-SCUP workshops were traded between association annual meetings in an effort to improve communications. AIR Presidents who also served as SCUP Presidents and the years in which individuals served as Presidents of SCUP included Marv Peterson (1987–88), Marilyn McCoy (1988–89), Laura Saunders (2000–01), and Mike Middaugh (2005–06).

In Deb Teeter's and Gerry McLaughlin's terms as President of AIR, an expanded array of professional learning and development opportunities separate from the Forum became a reality. An Information Institute held in Breckenridge, CO and an Alumni Institute offered in Durham, NH in1990 would lead to a much wider variety of between-Forum Institute offerings into the 1990s and beyond.

Data Policy

AIR's input to policy formulation, with regard to data quality standards and related issues varied during the 1980s. In the 1970s, various AIR committees existed after the establishment of the Association's Central Office at Florida State University in 1974, which would suggest the Association's interests in data quality and policy development. Among these were an ad hoc Standards and Ethics Committee (1975–76), a Data Analysis and Information Exchange Committee (1976–77), and a Policy Analysis Committee (1977–78 to 1979–80), which was chaired by Molly Broad, then an AIR Member-at-Large and Executive Assistant to the President for Governmental Affairs at Syracuse University and currently (2010), President of the American Council on Education.

At the start of the1980s, there were mixed feelings as to whether AIR as an organization or its individual members should take positions on data reporting and policy issues emanating from the federal government, accrediting agencies, or other producers of data. A Data Policy Committee did not exist in 1980–81. In 1981–82, a Higher Education Association Articulation Committee was formed and chaired by a Member-at-Large on the Executive Committee. The committee was charged with "(1) investigating areas of cooperation among associations with programs similar to that of AIR; and (2) keeping AIR members and officers informed about policy matters which might affect the

Association or its members." An objective for 1982–83 was to "select ad hoc committees to address policy issues which are of interest to AIR." The Committee was disbanded after the 1983 Forum in Toronto.

The Ad Hoc Commission to Reassess the Purposes and Objectives of the Association devoted a major section of its report to the various issues related to influencing policy development. It concluded that as a tax-exempt organization with membership from many types of organizations, the Association's role was not to directly lobby for or against given policy measures. The Commission urged that the Association could and should play an active role in encouraging appropriate agencies to utilize the knowledge and techniques developed by institutional research practitioners. In its final report submitted to the Executive Committee in April 1984, the Commission saw AIR's role as that of "a resource agent contributing to policy development rather than an agency concerned with making its position known on specific issues."

A Task Force on HEGIS/IPEDS Development chaired by Marsha Kelman of the University of Texas was formed in June 1984. Kelman also chaired the subsequent AIR IPEDS Implementation Review Committee appointed after the 1986 Annual Business Meeting, which was charged with recommending strategies for working more effectively with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The Committee recommended that "AIR should appoint a standing committee to serve as a liaison between NCES and AIR membership to reconcile the problems and issues with IPEDS." (*1987–88 AIR Directory,* p. 84). A new AIR Data Advisory Committee, also chaired by Kelman, was appointed following the 1988 Forum in Phoenix and was charged with "laying the groundwork for an expanded role for AIR with agencies and governments utilizing national data." Ensuing cooperation with NCES was such that five panels, four papers, several table topics, and a demonstration were presented by NCES staff at the 1989 Forum in Baltimore. By the end of the 1980s, through its individual members and as an organization, AIR had replaced the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) as the primary consultant, source of input, and major contributor to improving NCES data collection policies and efforts at the state, national, and international levels.

While the initiatives described above were efforts that originated with the Association, there were reciprocal efforts on the part of NCES. Specifically, Sam Peng and Susan Broyles, both of whom received the Association's Outstanding Service Award, were instrumental in bringing AIR members (many from the Data Advisory Committee) into many of the Technical Review Panels (TRP) that advised NCES on the definition and manipulation of proposed data elements to be collected in IPEDS. In addition, Bill Freund worked effectively to make early versions of IPEDS data available to AIR members and other higher education researchers. Many of these efforts from NCES were initiated under the direction and leadership of Dr. Emerson Elliot, Commissioner of Educational Statistics at NCES. As described by Mary Sapp in the next section of this chapter, Elliot was recognized for his support in building the working relationship that developed between the Association and NCES.

During the decade of the 1980s, the Association moved 180 degrees, both philosophically and operationally, in its relationship with NCES. Working closely with NCES by the end of the decade, the Association maintained the role suggested by the Commission to be a resource to external data collection and analysis efforts.

The AIR Central Office

Throughout the decade of the 1980s, primary responsibility for the administrative functions of the Association was most ably carried out by Executive Secretary Jean Chulak. The Association's 1980–81 budget totaled only $149,815 in Revenues and Expenditures, with individual memberships and Forum fees set at $25 and $70, respectively. By 1989–90, actual Expenditures totaled $379,409 with individual membership and Forum registration fees set at $50 and $150, respectively. Space was always at a premium, totaling about 750 square feet in a suite of rooms within the School of Education building, at Florida State University. In 1980–81, in addition to Jean Chulak, there was a full-time office secretary, a part-time clerk who handled the membership files, and a part-time graduate assistant who was responsible for the library and special projects. Former Graduate Assistant, the late Julia Duckwall, for whom an Association scholarship is named, worked on computer projects/problems when called upon. The Central Office was responsible for financial administration; compilation and distribution of Executive Committee and Annual Business Meeting materials; coordination of the process for nomination and election of officers; management of the membership records and renewal process; coordination of an AIR Placement Service that, in 1981–82, listed from one to 10 positions of interest to approximately 50 registered participants; and coordination and planning for the Forum including mailings of the call for proposals, printing of programs, and Forum registrations. In 1981–82, the Central Office also coordinated the site selection processes for the 1984 Forum with the 1984 Local Arrangements Chairperson.

The Central Office also handled subscription materials for the *Research in Higher Education* and the *New Directions for Institutional Research* series. Responsibility for the *AIR Newsletter* was shifted from the Publications Board to the Executive Committee with the Central Office assuming responsibility for production of the *AIR Newsletter* in 1980–81. In December 1981, the Central Office issued the *1981–82 Directory of AIR Members,* a publication which also included the minutes, agenda materials, as well as committee chair reports for the 1981 Annual Business Meeting in Minneapolis. Thereafter, the *Annual Directories* became a valuable continuing historical source of committee structures, membership, and reports for the Association.

By the end of the decade, AIR membership had increased from 1,765 in 1980–81 to 2,402 in 1989–90, an increase of 36.1%. Membership services had become more diverse, and the Central Office was more involved in the Forum site selection process as well as supporting an ever-widening array of professional development activities. Jean Chulak's position title had been changed to Administrative Director at the February 1986 meeting of the Executive Committee. She was also charged with serving as editor of the *AIR Newsletter* and serving as "managing editor" of other edited items published through the Central Office. By 1989–90, the staff had grown slightly to include four full-time staff in the Central Office. In addition to Administrative Director Jean Chulak, full-time staff included Karen Parks, staff assistant-fiscal; Carol Daily, staff assistant-communications; and Sue Bramlett, staff assistant-membership. An additional part-time position was filled for the fourth year by Cindy Kemp. Technology came to the AIR office as 1988–89 marked the first full year in which BITNET was used in the office, and BITNET addresses were added to the *1988–89 AIR Directory*. At the 1989 Forum in Baltimore, Jean Chulak gave notice of her intent to retire as of December 31, 1991. Her last "Annual Report of the Administrative Director/Executive Office: A Retrospective" is especially informative as it looks back and chronicles some of the changes, growth, and development of the Association for the 17 years from 1974–91 (see *AIR 1991–92 Directory*, pp. 39–44).

Membership. As noted in Table 3.1, the increase in membership from 1,765 members in 1980–81 to 2,402 in 1989–90 included an option for organizational memberships recommended for consideration to the Executive Committee by the Commission to Reassess the Purposes and Objectives of the Association in its March 1984 report. By 1989–90, there were 151 organizational memberships from 89 institutions. Country/Region of Origin information on AIR membership is available from tables appearing in the back of the Annual AIR Member Directories. The figures summarized in

Table 3.1

AIR Membership by Type, 1980–81 and 1989–90

	1980–81	1989–90
Regular	1,683	2,277
Graduate	64	62
Emeritus	13	51
Distinguished	5	12
Total	1,765	2,402
Organizational	–	(151)

Table 3.2

AIR Membership by Country, 1980–81, 1989–90, and 1999–2000

	1980–81		1989–90		1999–2000	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
United States	1,506	85.3	2,088	86.9	2,860	92.6
Canada	189	10.7	149	6.2	125	4.1
Other International	70	4.0	165	6.9	103	3.3
Total	1,765	100.0	2,402	100.0	3,088	100.0
N Other Countries	22		25		28	

Table 3.2 indicate changes in total membership and types of membership at the start of the decade and, to add perspective, have been extended through the membership year 1999–2000, when total membership reached 3,088. Most notable was the decrease in the number and percentage of members from Canada—from 10.7% in 1980–81 to 6.2% in 1989–90, to 4.1% in 1999–2000, and 2.4% in 2010.

Forum. As described elsewhere in this volume, the Forum has been the signature event of the Association from its beginning. As described by Howard, it was at the third NIRF that there was a call for papers, panels, and symposia to be presented at the Forum, a practice which continued into the mid-1980s. Selection of those papers, panels, and symposia that were to be accepted for presentation was made initially by committees that were charged by the Forum Chair. As the number of proposals grew, it became more and more difficult to keep similar papers and panels from competing with each other. At the "slotting" meeting for the 1986 Forum in Orlando, Forum Chair Deb Teeter, Associate Forum Chair Gerry McLaughlin, and Paper Selection Committee Chair Melodie Christal sorted the papers into seven areas that, overall, defined institutional research activities. Structuring the call for proposals for the 1987 Forum in Kansas City around these seven content areas or tracks, McLaughlin's proposal review committee was made up of subcommittees representing each area. The majority of the Forum presentations were then scheduled within the framework of the seven tracks. And, while the original track structure has changed over the years to reflect the changing nature of institutional research, the track structure has continued to be the framework for organizing the Forum.

While providing a structure to help manage the scheduling of the Forum, these content areas also provided a mechanism for defining the activities and the unique knowledge base of institutional research. In the years following the 1986 and 1987 Forums, these content areas were refined and provided institutional researchers a structure for defining their work, both within and outside of the academy.

Awards. Bill Tetlow, President in 1981–82, stressed the need to honor the service of members to the Association. He had been influential in encouraging recognition of members through the Outstanding Service Award, which was first bestowed upon Charles I. Brown and Gus Froehlich in 1979 and given to 17 other members during the 1980s. The awarding of Emeritus Status had begun in 1977. The Sidney Suslow Award, honoring distinguished scholarship contributing to the development of the field of institutional research, was awarded for the first time in 1987 to Patrick Terenzini, Ernest Pascarella, and Howard Bowen. Two additional Suslow Awards were made in the 1980s, while five such awards were made in the 1990s.

At the beginning of the 1980s, six individuals had been honored as Distinguished Members. By the end of that decade, nine more individuals had been so honored including Mary E. Corcoran, Cameron L. Fincher, Lois E. Torrence, Lyman A. Glenny, Kenneth L. Mortimer, Bernard S. Sheehan, Paul Jedamus, Marvin W. Peterson, and Joan S. Stark. Brief profiles of the first seven Distinguished Members appeared in the Winter/Spring 1982 issue of the *AIR Newsletter*.

Governance. A governance change approved in 1979 was implemented in 1980 when the Executive Committee was expanded from nine to 11 members through the election of a Forum Chair and an Associate Forum Chair. Bob Fenske, Professor of Higher Education at Arizona State University, was elected to serve as the first Forum Chair for the 1980 Forum in Atlanta; John Chase, then Director of Analytical Studies at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, was elected as Associate Forum Chair for the Atlanta Forum and Chair of the 1981 Forum in Minneapolis. Prior to that time, the Vice President had also served as the Program Chair for the Forum before assuming the duties of President.

Through the 1980s, there were four Members-at-Large on the Executive Committee. Each Member-at-Large was elected for a two-year term. Committee responsibilities for Members-at-Large were determined each year at the discretion of the President. Although assignments tended to remain the same for an individual's two-year term, the responsibilities of a Member-at-Large could change from year to year, depending on the backgrounds of the four Members-at-Large and the Association's priorities for the year.

Through most of the 1980s, the two Member-at-Large candidates receiving the highest number of votes from a list of four candidates slated by the Nominating Committee were elected to office. The two candidates receiving the highest number of votes were elected. As the overall membership in the Association was predominantly from public four-year institutions in the United States, concerns were expressed with regard to the electability to AIR office of individuals from outside the United States or from the private or community college sectors, all of which were in the relative minority. References were made to the "SAIR and University of Michigan Mafias" as groups that had become, in the views of some, overly represented in the elected officers of the Association.

To address concerns about representation, access, and involvement of AIR members, President Laura Saunders appointed an eight-person Ad Hoc Committee on Representation, chaired by Vice President Don Reichard. The committee was charged with reporting back to the Executive Committee by its September 1987 meeting (Summer 1988 *AIR Newsletter,* p. 10). The committee reported a lack of consensus with regard to the means by which representation should be analyzed, what would be lost or gained if the Association were to legislate a particular or "correct" representation, and where concerns over representation might end (*1988–89 AIR Directory*, pp. 90–94). Should unusual situations need to be addressed, it should be noted that the Executive Committee has always had the power to instruct the Nominating Committee to develop a paired ballot for each of the two Members-at-Large elected annually, thereby assuring a result in any area for which there was a priority concern. This option was exercised in 1985–86 when concerns over international representation resulted in the pairing of two non-North Americans for a single Member-at-Large position, thus ensuring the election of an international candidate. The 1989–90 Nominating Committee also chose to pair candidates for the Member-at-Large positions.

The need for clarification or at least some permanence in the duties of Members-at-Large was recognized by the Committee on Representation and, in part, by the subsequent approval of Constitutional Amendments in 1988–89. These Amendments approved standing committee status for the Associated Groups, Data Advisory, Forum, International Development, and Membership Committees in addition to the already existing Publications and Professional Development Services Boards, which continued as standing committees. These changes would, in turn, lead to a series of six Constitutional changes that occurred in 1994, resulting in the reorganization of the Executive Committee into a Board of Directors, where the Members-at-Large were elected to three-year terms as Chairs of specifically designated standing committees.

Policy Changes. Several relatively minor operational policy changes took place in the 1980s that are worthy of note. The first such change was implemented when George Beatty relinquished the President's gavel to Bill Tetlow at the close of the May 19, 1981 Annual Business Meeting in Minneapolis, thereby becoming, at that time, the shortest serving (10½ months) AIR President in history. Prior to that time, the President assumed office on July 1 in accordance with the fiscal year, rather than at the close of the Forum. This policy change eliminated an unproductive period of as much as two months between the Forum and July 1, when the sitting president was looking forward to past-president status while the president-elect was willing but unable to officially begin work.

The second policy change was the practice of routinely scheduling a special budget briefing, usually prior to the opening session of the Forum. The first of these briefings occurred at the 1982 Forum in Denver. The session afforded an opportunity to ask questions about and react to the 1982–83 AIR budget, which would be voted upon at the Annual Business Meeting later in the Forum. The briefings subsequently came to be affectionately referred to by some members of the Executive Committee as "The Adrian Harris Hour," in honor of Harris, Vice Chancellor for Planning at UCLA, whose probing budgetary questions did much to improve the presentation of the budget at the ensuing Annual Meeting sessions.

The third policy change agreed upon in the spring 1985 Executive Committee Meeting was to change both the membership and fiscal years to July 1–June 30. Previously, the membership year coincided with the end of the Annual Business Meeting at the Forum. With varying dates for the Forum from year to year, lack of standardization could cause several budgeting and planning anomalies. Implementation of this proposal meant that the 1985–86 membership year covered a nearly 14-month period, from the April 1985 Forum in Portland to the late-June 1986 Forum in Orlando.

The fourth "policy" change came in the change of the meeting title of The Good 'Ole Boys and Girl Club, to simply the Past Presidents Meeting. This was necessitated in 1986 by the ascendance of Marilyn McCoy to the position of Past President. Heretofore, Lois Torrence, AIR President in 1974–75, had been the only female President of the Association. Two additional women served as President in 1980s. Five women would serve as President in the 1990s, and four women served as AIR President in the first decade of the 21st century. The increased presence of women on the Executive Committee brought a preference for single rather than shared room accommodations. Accordingly, a policy allowing for single room reimbursement at Executive Committee meetings was approved in 1986–87.

Fun and Relationships

To a large degree, the success of the Association may be attributed to the comradeship of AIR members and leaders. Many interviewed have indicated that friendships that developed made the personal and professional associations in AIR some of the most enjoyable experiences of their careers. Members were willing to give of themselves and help out others in whatever way they can. We liked each other and had a lot of fun along the way. A few items recalled by AIR past presidents are noted in bulleted format below.

- The "appropriately" costumed and uproariously humorous appearances by Jeffrey Holmes, Director of the Education, Science, and Cultural Division of Stats Canada, as a Redcoat at the 1976 Los Angeles Forum, as a Viking at the 1981 Minnesota Forum, as well as a more "subdued" appearance at the 1983 Toronto Forum. Holmes' final appearance at the 1985 Portland Forum truly revealed his split personality, when he was forced to hold forth on the foibles of institutional researchers on Jim Montgomery's behalf as well because Montgomery was unable to attend due to a small plane mishap.

- The AIR chartered airline trip from Chicago to the Vancouver Forum in 1973.
- The AIR "sequel" train ride from Washington to the Montreal Forum in 1977.
- The "AIR Tones" vocal group including Bill Lasher, Don Norris, Rich Harpel, Rich Howard, Greg Lozier, and Linda Mannering that performed at several AIR Forum events in the 1980s.
- The Winter 1985, 1986, and 1987 Denver Executive Committee Meetings which, when adjourned, reconvened for skiing and fellowship at the condo of Marilyn McCoy and Chuck Thomas in Vail.
- A 1987 post-Executive Committee Meeting dinner held at Jean Chulak's home in Tallahassee, which featured a charades competition between the men and the women—won by the women with substantial assistance from an eavesdropping operation carried out against the opposition.

Summary

The 1980s were a period of steady incremental progress for the Association, facilitated greatly by Jean Chulak's extraordinarily capable assistance from the Central Office. Before the establishment of the AIR Central Office in Tallahassee and the creation of Jean Chulak's position as Executive Secretary in 1974, Association activities were conducted largely on a volunteer basis with the earlier officers running the Association, for the most part out of their home offices. As such, AIR presidents from larger public research institutions with reasonable staff capacity tended to be elected. This was the case, without exception, until 1978–79 when Bob Wallhaus, then with the Illinois State Board of Higher Education, became President.

The creation of the Central Office in Tallahassee in 1974 changed the Association from essentially a volunteer organization to an organization that could provide support for the Association's basic financial, membership, and Forum-related administrative functions, support the production and distribution of the *AIR Newsletter,* and provide strong support to the Executive Committee as well as limited assistance to various subcommittees. Wrestling with questions of representation, relationships with affiliated groups, internationalism, the Association's involvement with data policy issues, and adopting the professional development of its members as a primary purpose of the Association in the 1980s were necessary steps as preparation for the changes that would become possible under new leadership and reorganization in the 1990s.

As was the case prior to the 1980s, throughout that decade and afterwards, progress made by the leadership and members of the Association was made possible by standing on the shoulders of those who had gone before them. When Terry Russell arrived in September 1991 with expanded responsibilities as Executive Director to seek grants and represent AIR's interests in various policy arenas, the Association would be prepared to adopt new organizational patterns and relationships that would guide it through the 1990s and beyond.

1990–1999

Mary Sapp

University of Miami

Material for this section is drawn from Annual Reports, minutes from Annual Business Meetings and Executive Committee Board meetings, and interviews with Terry Russell and individuals who served as AIR President between 1990 and 2000 (Mantha Mehallis, Ellen Chaffee, Ed Delaney, John Muffo, Rich Howard, Trudy Bers, Tim Sanford, Mary Sapp, and Marsha Krotseng). Note: Bill Fendley, President from 1998–99, died in 2007 but material based on his Annual Report has been included.

The 1990s marked a period of major change for the Association. 1991 was milestone year, with the transition from Administrative Director to a new Executive Director and related changes in office structure. In keeping with a planned shift to a more professional leadership and governance structure, in 1993 the membership voted to amend the Constitution and Bylaws so that the Executive Committee was redesignated as a Board of Directors.

One of the major contributions of the new Executive Director, Dr. Terrence Russell, was to obtain a series of grants from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) to fund new research and training initiatives. This reconstituted governance structure plus the infusion of the grant funds facilitated an expansion of services, including a new family of Institutes, new and enhanced publications, and the creation of grant and fellowship opportunities.

Perhaps more importantly, the Association's stature was enhanced as a result of connections Terry Russell made with NCES and the Dupont Circle groups in Washington, DC, and as AIR members became more involved in providing input on higher education data policy. The governing body evolved from a conglomeration of committee chairs into a more unified decision-making Board. Furthermore, the self-identity of institutional researchers improved after AIR adopted a Code of Ethics, started to define core competencies, began to expand its professional development activities, and became more active in higher education data policy.

Organizational/Governance Changes

Hiring Terry Russell. One of the most important changes related to governance/organization was the transition from Administrative Director to Executive Director. With the announcement of the pending retirement of Jean Chulak, AIR's Administrative Director since 1974, a search committee was appointed and began its work in summer 1990.

Dr. Terrence Russell was hired in September 1991 as Executive Director and overlapped Jean for three months to facilitate the transition. One anecdote that Mantha Mehallis (AIR President 1990–91) remembers about the process was that interviews took place during the first Gulf War, and Board members kept running back to their rooms between interviews to get the latest updates on TV.

According to Mantha, Terry was by far the top choice, but he did not accept immediately because he had reservations about moving to Tallahassee, FL from DC. So she (as past president) and Ed Delaney (president-elect) flew to DC and took Terry and his wife Linda to dinner to review the contract and try to get him to accept, knowing that if he did not accept, the Association would need to start the search process all over again because he was the "only" choice of the Executive Committee. Mantha said that after the dinner, in which Terry did indeed end up accepting the position, she and Ed were so happy that they literally skipped down the sidewalk from the restaurant.

In the words of Ellen Chaffee (AIR President 1991–92), "Russell brought new capabilities to the office, as reflected in the title change. He was well-connected in the research world and in Washington, DC, and had relevant expertise and appropriate skills to undergird, lead, and symbolize the professionalization of institutional research.... From my rather distant vantage point, it looks to me as if this shift was absolutely correct, foundational to the association's successes since that time, and brilliantly executed by Dr. Russell."

Change from an Executive Committee to a Board. As Ellen makes clear, this shift in leadership represented not only a change in personnel but also the beginning of an increase in professionalism in both institutional research in general and the conduct of the business of the Association in particular. Ed Delaney (AIR President 1992–93) explained that "Terry was the new player, and the Board had to change in response to have him more involved in all committee activities. He became the communication and support connection. [AIR leadership] needed to start acting more like Board members (planning and prioritizing) than doing (Terry and the office took over more of that)."

After Terry's arrival the Central Office, the Board reorganized and reviewed the Constitution and Bylaws. In the fall of 1993, the membership approved the following changes to the Constitution and Bylaws, effective in the 1994–95 year: The Executive Committee was designated as a Board of Directors, Members-at-Large (who had been appointed by the President to serve as chairs of AIR's committees) were replaced with Board Members who were elected to these committee chair positions by the members, and the term for committee chairs was increased from two to three years (except for the Forum Committee Chair, who retained a two-year term). The functions of the International Development Committee and the Associated Groups Committee were combined into a new External Relations Committee, chaired by the AIR Secretary, and the membership of this new committee was expanded to include representation from other higher education associations, government, and related agencies. The 1993 vote also created some changes in nomenclature (e.g., "Committees" instead of "Boards") and eliminated references.

In the words of Mantha Mehallis, these decisions were intended "to change the structure of the Association from a 'Ma (Jean) and Pop' organization to a truly professional organization." Ellen Chaffee described it in a similar way: "moving from a fairly ad hoc 'family style' approach to a more bureaucratic, legal, and HR professional approach."

Of course, the Board meetings were not all about budgets and policy. Tim Sanford (AIR President, 1996–97) recalled the Board meeting in New Orleans that was temporarily adjourned so Board members could run outside and catch beads from an early St. Patrick's Day Parade and Irish Pub Crawl of the New Orleans' Irish Channel Crewe. And Mary Sapp (AIR President, 1997–98) remembers that Trudy Bers liked to pass around boxes of Fannie Mae chocolates at the meetings.

Strategic Planning. In 1991–93, the Executive Committee undertook a major strategic planning effort led by then-Vice President Ed Delaney, who explained that "Terry needed a strategic plan since he was new." The process started with a weekend retreat in September 1991 that allowed input from members of AIR committees and boards and the incorporation of goals into the committee plans. It continued the next year, with outside consulting donated by Don Norris. The Board started using a strategic planning matrix to track plans of Board members and their committees over a three-year horizon and, where appropriate, organizing annual reports around AIR strategic initiatives.

Culture Changes

Culture Change for the Board. One of the challenges for AIR presidents was helping to facilitate change. In the words of Ellen Chaffee, "The Association need[ed] to get beyond self-absorption, to move from SWOTS [Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats] and scans to visions and actions, from people who share a job to people who share a belief, from information for decisions to information for decisions and policies." Trudy Bers (AIR President, 1995–96) described the change between when she was first on the Executive Committee (1992) and when she became President: "Things were very much in silos and committees operated very independently. The shift started with Terry. AIR moved toward organizational focus rather than committee focus (which was huge)." Terry agreed, remarking that the Board was like a "collection of interested department chairs."

Change in Stature of the Association. Due to Terry's efforts, AIR became more influential at the federal level, and its relationships with the Dupont Circle associations also improved. In 1997, the Association became a member of the American Council on Education, and AIR was also active in the Council of Higher Education Management

Associations, Council for Higher Education Accreditation, and the national benchmarking efforts.

Terry's connections with NCES led not only to research and fellowship grants but also to a change in the nature of the relationship with NCES, which had not been strong and was at times even somewhat adversarial (particularly with respect to Student Right-to-Know). The 1989 Forum in Baltimore initiated a more substantive involvement with NCES, and during the 1990s Terry built on this through his Washington, DC connections. In the words of Rich Howard (AIR President, 1994–95), "Terry was the key." As President, Rich presented a Friend of the Association Award to Emerson J. Elliott, Commissioner of Education Statistics, when he retired in 1995 in recognition of the "increased awareness by NCES of the importance of IR since we provided the data."

Marsha Krotseng (AIR President, 1999–2000) summarized the change that occurred leading up to her presidency: "Major issues focused around federal government and data policy and collaborations/partnerships with federal agencies—this was a shift from when I first joined AIR through the 1990s to now when the federal government seeks our expertise...The big thing that Terry did was his involvement with federal government and obtaining grants. He had built the networks and was continuing them. This is the area where a lot of us saw Terry's real strengths." Bill Fendley (AIR President, 1998–99) made the same point when he wrote, "[Terry Russell] has proven to be an outstanding spokesman for the Association and has garnered respect from fellow higher education associations and federal agencies."

Change in Self Identity of Members. During this time, many institutional researchers also felt institutional research was evolving from a vocation into a "profession." The elevation in stature of the Association was one factor. The development of a code of ethics and specialized training (parts of the definition of *profession*) were others.

The Professional Development Services Board drafted an AIR Code of Ethics, publishing it and related commentary in *New Directions for Institutional Research* in April 1992. The Code was ratified by members in the fall of 1992. An Ethics Task Force was set up to maintain and promote education about the Code, including the use of an ethics listserv starting in 1996; another task force undertook a review of the Code in 1998. AIR's Code of Ethics was endorsed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The identification in 1991–93 of core areas for AIR's first foundational Institute and the subsequent development of advanced Institutes helped define specialized training for institutional research (graduate certificate programs in institutional research supported by AIR, which started after the 1990s, took this to a higher level).

The *AIR Alerts* (see below) introduced resources related to higher education data policy analysis that members could pass on to senior administrators in their institutions in an attempt to expand the image of IR to encompass policy analysis in addition to data analysis.

Policy/Practice Changes

Revised Policies. The revised governance structure led to a new central office structure and to the development of a Policy and Procedures Manual (created by Jean Chulak in 1991). This manual underwent major revisions through an effort led by Trudy Bers in 1996 so that it would be in line with the new Constitution and the Executive Director model for governance. The Terms of Reference and Operating Guidelines for AIR committees were first approved in 1991 and also underwent major revisions, approved in 1995. A new personnel manual, approved in 1997, included changes to compensatory time. In 1996, an Orientation Session for Standing Committee members was added to the Forum following breakfast on Sunday so that members could meet one another and hear about strategic thinking, committee responsibilities, and other matters important to their serving effectively, and orientation materials for Board members were developed in 1999.

A number of additional policy changes occurred during the 1990s. The Constitution was changed to allow for other than postal mail ballots. Terms for members of standing committee members were defined to begin and end at the close of the Annual Business Meeting. The Board was supposed to take action only on items in the Board book. AIR would not endorse products or services offered for sale, and policy endorsements were restricted to issues compatible with the written purposes of the Association. Honoraria were limited to situations in which payment was needed to secure expertise, using rates approved by the Board and an open recruitment process.

Budget. The budget of the Association tripled in the 1990s (from around $400K in fiscal year 1990 to around $1.3 million in calendar year 1999). At the beginning of the decade, the budget required a great deal of attention on the part of the Executive Committee because of the cost of the Executive Director search, paying two Director salaries while Terry and Jean overlapped in the office, and payment of $30,000 for accrued sick leave to Jean when she left. In the words of John Muffo (AIR President, 1993–94), “We were broke. The focus was on survival mainly.” Two examples of cut-backs were the elimination in 1993 of continental breakfasts at the Forum (which had been included as part of registration fees earlier) and the decision that Board members room together at Board meetings.

In 1991, a Task Force on Advancement and Development was appointed to identify new sources of funds. In 1997, a Financial Task Force chaired by the Treasurer was created to review financial operations and to serve as a sounding board. And, as Marsha Krotseng said, “There are always the Adrian [Harris] stories. Everyone agrees he did a real service. He definitely had some view points and asked hard questions that needed to be asked and kept us on our toes.” Organizational membership, collection of previous year’s dues from individuals attending the Forum, and inclusion of a publication (and if so, which one) were “perennial topics” of Board discussion.

By the end of the decade, budget issues were no longer a major concern, due in large part to the influx of almost $9 million in grants from NCES and NSF between 1995 and 2000 (although they carried with them concern on the part of some that AIR might become too dependent on grants). Furthermore, membership recruitment was expanded to include assessment directors, state coordinators, and policy-makers in addition to institutional researchers at the institution level. Terry Russell saw "a shift from concern about enough money when he arrived (a definite problem) to having enough money to focus on being a good steward by the mid-1990s."

Committees were responsible for their budgets, and Terry was responsible for the external grant budgets. The division of labor between Terry and the treasurer has been a function of the interest and financial knowledge of the treasurers and how complicated the budget became as a result of the grants, but according to Terry, during the 1990s, the treasurers were fairly involved.

The fiscal year was changed from July 1 through June 30 to a calendar-year schedule. According to Tim Sanford, the change was made because of a "bookkeeping challenge rather than a real problem with funds." The intent was to reduce the burden on staff, who had to close the books immediately after the Forum, and to pick a time when there was not a major imbalance of either revenue or expenses.

Ellen Chaffee noted, "In hindsight it seems as if we began making financial decisions differently—from 'make sure we have enough money, be prudent' to 'some level of risk is worth taking when deciding how best to invest in appropriate member benefits.' In both cases, however, fiscal responsibility was demonstrated better by AIR than any other membership entity I have seen before or since."

Space at the Florida State University (FSU) and Staff. According to Ed Delaney, before 1992 "we didn't have a real contract with FSU, so a more formal contract was negotiated to formalize office space and the role of AIR in FSU" (in Ed's words "a landmark" event). In 1995, the office moved to new space in the School of Education at FSU (114 Stone Building) that was twice as large as the space at FSU that the Association had occupied since 1979.

The Central Office staff doubled by the end of the 1990s, and each AIR committee had its own staff member assigned to work on committee projects. Starting in 1992, graduate student interns augmented the staff. The Association finances moved from the FSU system to a stand-alone system. In 1993–94, the office replaced its main databases with an integrated membership/financial management system and upgraded office computers to MS Windows. Ongoing upgrades continued throughout the rest of the decade.

Relationships with Other Organizations. One of the big issues of the 1990s was relationships with sister organizations, in particular European AIR (EAIR), Australasian AIR (AAIR), Canadian AIR, and other international AIR organizations that began to develop during this time. The role of AIR vis-à-vis these international organizations was debated (should AIR serve as an umbrella group, a convener of a federated group, or an equal partner in a federated group?) and evolved during the decade into what Tim Sanford called "'Sister' organizations rather than 'child' organizations." Rich Howard described it as a recognition that "they were more stand-alone and that we needed to build more of a confederation with reciprocal agreements than treating them as a U.S. regional" group. As John Muffo saw it, "The big change was getting people to think of international as being more than Canada and Europe."

EAIR met for the first time as a constitutionally separate organization in 1990, and the inaugural meeting of Australasian AIR took place the same year. John Muffo attended a meeting of AIR, EAIR, and AAIR at the EAIR conference in Turku, Finland, in 1993, where a letter of understanding was signed by all three. He also visited China in 1993 to help with the founding of the first institutional research organization there; on this visit, he "made first contacts there at a time before many Westerners had visited some of the places that I went to represent AIR." The Southern African Association for Institutional Research (SAAIR) was founded in 1994, and Rich Howard attended a meeting of the SAAIR during his presidential year. An agreement with Canada was negotiated by Tim Sanford and signed in 1997. The Puerto Rican Institute in 1997 was AIR's first significant instructional venture outside the continental United States.

In January 1991, an International Development Committee (IDC) Chair had been added to the Executive Committee by virtue of a membership vote in the fall of 1989 to elect a Board member to serve as IDC Chair rather than having a Board member with other responsibilities function as liaison to the IDC. The IDC Chair, however, was not included in the new Board structure approved in 1993. Instead, the responsibilities for the IDC were combined with those relating to other affiliated groups as part of the new Board structure approved in 1993.

AIR services for affiliated groups and their members expanded somewhat during the 1990s. Program grants and travel grants awarded during the 1980s continued. In addition, Best Paper presentations were added in 1993 to showcase the best presentation made at conferences of affiliated groups. The Train-the-Trainer program was added in 1994 as a cooperative effort of Professional Development and Associated Groups. The program provided discounted enrollments to individuals who promised to teach pre-Forum workshops at their regional/state group meetings. Affiliated groups nominated individuals to participate in the workshops, AIR waived the registration, and nominating associations were encouraged to provide support to their trainers. Trudy Bers remembers that in 1994 (when she was Chair of Associated Groups), she and Mary Sapp (who had just completed her service as Chair of the PDS Board that developed the first Foundations Institute) came up with the Train-the-Trainer concept one evening when they were sitting in a hotel room eating cookies. A professional AIR exhibit for use at associated group meetings was purchased in 1997 to showcase AIR services at meetings of affiliated groups.

Efforts were also made to undertake cooperative initiatives with other professional organizations. For example, Rich Howard set up a series of panels with leaders from AIR, the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP), and College and University Systems Exchange (CAUSE) at each association's annual meetings to see how functions overlapped, but unfortunately this effort "later died." Some discussion of joint administrative offices with SCUP also took place, but that did not work out either. Bill Fendley met with the National Association of Student Aid Administrators to discuss joint activities and future collaborations.

Major Membership Services

Institutes. In 1990–91, three theme-based Institutes were offered (on Quality, Assessment, and Alumni Research) as a continuation of an Institute program started the year before (when two Institutes were held). Although they received high evaluations, the cost to participants was perceived as too high, attendance was low, and the three 1990 Institutes lost money. In light of AIR's overall budget problems in 1991, there was pressure to discontinue the Institutes; however, the Board was persuaded to allow the Professional Development Services (PDS) Board to develop a new Institute—but with the condition that it could not lose money.

In-depth study and planning took place between 1991 and 1993. The 1989–90 Institutes were evaluated, and a focused survey of IR directors was conducted that indicated cost and immediate payoff were critical considerations. A second survey, of past presidents and other AIR leaders, identified six core areas and experts in each. The PDS Board decided to develop an Institute that would offer professional training in a more focused and structured setting than the Forum, at an introductory level, and at a reasonable cost. Task forces for each of the core areas were created to develop material for each module.

The first of what became AIR's Foundations for the Practice of Institutional Research Institute was held in July–August of 1993 at Northern Kentucky University, and that Institute served as a model for a series of other Institutes developed in the 1990s. The inaugural Institute introduced two elements: first, the concept of modules, each taught by different faculty, from which participants could choose (in this case, five of six modules); and second, the decision to house the Institute at an institution of higher education (which was done for a number of years). Happily, the Institute ended up with a surplus even though costs were low (only $399 for four days, including housing and meals).

Furthermore, the intent was that the new Institute provide more than just training for Institute participants. Modules developed for the Institute were also offered by Institute faculty as pre-Forum workshops and at regional meetings. Institutional researchers in affiliated groups benefited from the module material as a result of a Train-the-Trainer program. In addition, instructional materials for five of the six modules were turned into monographs published as part of AIR's *Resources in Institutional Research* (RIR) series.

A variation of this first Foundations Institute was offered six more times during the 1990s (at various locations). An Advanced Institute was offered in 1995 at the University of Delaware and the following year at Berkeley. At that time, in the words of Tim Sanford, "Institutes were hitting their stride so AIR started to add new ones." The approach shifted to a series of more focused topical Institutes, starting with Information Technology, offered at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis in the summers of 1997, 1998, and 1999, and the Statistics Institute, offered in 1998 and 1999 at the University of Georgia and UC-Santa Barbara. Another approach, the drive-in workshop, was piloted in March 1999 at Seton Hall on the topic "Web-Enabled IR."

In addition to the AIR professional development institutes, starting in the summer of 1997, AIR also provided fellowships to the NCES/NSF Database Institutes and, beginning in the summer of 1998, to the NSF Data Institute for graduate students. Both were held in the Washington, DC area. Funding for the fellowships came from a grant from NCES and NSF that was renewed over the years. AIR received an additional grant to start a train-the-trainer program for the new IPEDS, which started in 1997.

The Institutes generated several memories from past presidents. Mary Sapp recalled the need to hand out toilet paper and blankets during the opening reception of the first Foundations Institute at Northern Kentucky and the fire outside her apartment (due to a suitemate who tossed cigarette butts out the window). As Institute Coordinator, she waited with Terry Russell in the women's lingerie section of K-Mart when they went to buy the blankets (and Terry reminded her that some members wanted to keep their blankets even though it was announced they were going to be donated to a local charity). Trudy Bers has claimed, however, that the San Diego Foundations Institute (where she was a faculty member) may have "surpassed" the first Northern Kentucky Institute because a chain link fence around the dorms was padlocked and no one answered the phone (also, there was only decaf coffee). According to Trudy, the physical aspect was a disaster but it bonded the group (as was the case at Northern Kentucky). Terry Russell's favorite Institute story is from the Foundations Institute at Berkeley. Around two dozen Chileans (counting relatives of registrants) attended. They all arrived with empty suitcases so they would have space to take home merchandise from their shopping sprees, and "Uncle Jorge," who was around 90, was picked up by police several times when he wandered off.

Forums. Terry Russell instituted several changes in Forum planning, including lengthening the planning horizon from two to five years, contracting with Conferon to use their conference-planning services (in 1992), and relying on office staff more. These changes allowed the negotiation of better contracts and the coordination of locations for Forums and Institutes. There was also a change from the early 1990s, when Forum chairs were still using what Marsha Krotseng called the "Jean Chulak method" for slotting programs (arranging cards on a table to plan the schedule) to the use of computer technology. With these changes came a decrease in direct responsibility for the Forum on the part of the Forum Chair. The involvement of the Local Arrangements Committee also decreased, in part, because of the difficulty in finding an off-site location for the Monday night event that could accommodate large numbers and the increase in costs (which led to subsidies of the actual cost during some years). Marsha Krotseng commented on one constant at the Forum: "Piet is always there, quietly taking pictures" referring to Dr. Piet G. A. Veugelers, Advisor of the Governing Committee (Emeritus).

Prior to 1993, several types of fee-based hands-on training sessions were offered at the Forum: Professional Development Opportunities and Workshops (both offered before the opening session) and Practica (offered in competition with papers and panels). Starting in 1993, practica were discontinued to avoid competition with the rest of the program and longer fee-based professional development sessions were offered only before the Forum. To minimize confusion about the distinction, all were called *workshops*.

In 1996, a Long-Range Forum Planning Task Force was established, and the AIR Store was introduced. Also in 1996, Forum papers were made available to members on diskette and on the new website, and the Forum Book went online for the first time in 1998. The business meeting was moved from Wednesday to Tuesday in 1997.

Ed Delaney shared this Forum anecdote: "One of the keynote speakers at the 1993 Chicago Forum was the corporate VP for Quality Services at Marriott, who spoke on Total Quality Management. When the bulb on his slide projector burned out, Forum attendees were treated to seeing an army of Marriott workers running down the aisles with bulbs."

For many AIR members, the most memorable Monday-evening event was at the 1994 Forum in New Orleans, when motorcycles, a band, and Mardi Gras floats drove through the hotel ballroom; Forum Chair Marsha Krotseng and Associate Forum Chair Bill Fendley were decked out in Mardi Gras finery; and Local Arrangements Chair Rene Toups provided a show-stopping performance.

Other Conferences. One of the conditions for the expanded space into which the Central Office moved at FSU was that AIR offer a Colloquium focused on a topic in higher education. These were held throughout the decade, starting in 1992. Topics included total quality management, change in higher education, staffing of open enrollment institutions, indicators of quality in higher education, and the future of institutional research. The largest enrollment (70) was in connection with what was billed as a town meeting on national data, titled "Changing IPEDS for the 21st Century."

AIR also co-sponsored a series of conferences with CASE. In 1998 the Conference on Alumni Research, held at Georgetown University, led to a *New Directions for Institutional Research* publication. In 1999, the topic was "Communicating Institutional Quality," again at Georgetown, and the following year, the topic was "New Demographics of Philanthropy" at Washington University.

Publications. The *Resources in Institutional Research* (*RIR*) series was created in 1992. It was intended to be a practitioner-oriented series that would provide tools and techniques to help institutional researchers perform their jobs more effectively. Five prior publications (dating back the 1970s) were designated as part of the series. New publications during the 1990s included *Questionnaire Survey Research* by Linda A. Suskie (1992, with a second edition in 1996); *The Primer for Institutional Research* by Meredith A. Whitely, John D. Porter, and Robert H. Fenske (1992); *Reference Sources: An Annotated Bibliography for Institutional Research* by William R. Fendley and Linda T. Seeloff (1993); *Strategies for the Practice of Institutional Research* by Michael F. Middaugh, Dale W. Trusheim, and Karen W. Bauer (1993); *Case Study Applications of Statistics in Institutional Research* by Mary Ann Coughlin and Marian Pagano (1997, a joint publication with Northeast AIR); *People, Processes, and Managing Data* by Gerald W. McLaughlin, Richard D. Howard, Lore A. Balkan, and Elizabeth W. Blythe (1998); and *Effective Reporting* by Trudy H. Bers and Jeffrey A. Seybert (1999). After the first year, when the Suskie monograph was sold to members for a 50% discount ($5.00), one or two of the *RIR* publications were included as part of the membership for all members and later on for new members.

In 1997, AIR started publishing *AIR Alerts*. Twenty *Alerts* were published between then and the end of the decade, covering topics such as the Common Data Set (CDS), Student Right-to-Know, IPEDS Redesign, and Race/Ethnicity. Alerts were originally published via email, on the website, and as tear-outs in the *AIR Currents* newsletter. According to Mary Sapp, "The purpose was to present the AIR membership with timely and substantive information on data policy issues that might affect them in the future. The hope was that intuitional researchers would share these policy-related publications with their senior administrators, thereby helping to elevate the stature of IR on campuses."

AIR's website was launched in 1995–96 and redesigned in 1998 to include an online member directory, the Forum program book, papers from the Minneapolis Forum, *AIR Alerts*, Internet resources for institutional research, a chat room, and expanded information about the Association.

Issues of the *AIR Professional File* continued to be included in membership dues, along with the *AIR Currents* newsletter, *Electronic AIR*, and a membership directory. Members also were eligible for discounts for *Research in Higher Education,* the official journal of AIR (the Forum issue was sent to all members); *New Directions for Institutional Research* series (whose editor is an ex officio member of AIR's Publications Committee); *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory & Research* (which AIR published jointly with the Association for the Study of Higher Education); and the *Journal of Higher Education*.

In 1995, a task force on communication was established, and as a result, *AIR Currents* was revamped. A technology task force was set up in 1997 and published three resources in 1999.

Research Grants. In 1995, AIR received a $1.4 million grant from NCES and NSF to fund a five-year program of grants for research projects using national databases, which was reauthorized in 2000. The first cycle of research grants, available to staff and faculty of postsecondary education institutions, was in 1996.

Higher Education Data Policy. The Data Advisory Committee (transformed into the Higher Education Data Policy Committee [HEDPC] when changes to the Board were made in 1993) monitored higher education data policy, and its members served on advisory panels for higher education data issues. The committee communicated issues to members and, in some cases, recommended action by the AIR Board. In 1996, the committee set up listservs to allow the electronic discussion of various topics of interest. It also published articles in the *Electronic AIR* and in the newsletter and arranged for presentations at the Forum on topics of interest. In addition, HEDPC was responsible for generating most of the *AIR Alerts* series.

A focus in the early and mid-1990s was on activities related to the creation of the CDS (Rich Howard noted that HEDPC "started working with *U.S. News [& World Report]* instead of fighting them"). Other issues addressed included Student Right-to-Know Act, State Postsecondary Review Entities, Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Joint Commission on Accountability Reporting, Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act, accreditation, IPEDS, National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, National Postsecondary Education Cooperative, Standard Survey Responses Forms, and race/ethnicity. According to Terry Russell, "By the end of the decade HEDPC was a lot more active, driven mostly by increased activity by NCES, which affected the rank and file members."

Leadership Development and Recognition. A Talent Scout program was begun in 1992, and a subcommittee on leadership development existed between 1995 and 1999. A mentoring program was tried but discontinued due to lack of participation.

In addition to the long-standing AIR awards, a Best of Practice Award was introduced in 1997 for IR reports and products, a Volunteer Recognition Award was introduced in 1998, Outstanding Presenters were recognized in 1999, and Terry Russell periodically presented "cat herder" awards.

Conclusion

Several themes came through the responses from AIR Presidents when they were asked about major accomplishments/changes during their presidency. Most past presidents made comments relating to the change in the culture of AIR associated with increased professionalism for the Board and the Association and supporting Terry Russell in his efforts to define his role as Executive Director. Most also referred to the change in stature associated with "moving into the DC scene" and strengthening the Association's connections and presence with NCES and the Dupont Circle sector. A number also mentioned increased involvement and support for international AIR Associations.

In addition to these common themes, AIR Presidents brought their own goals or themes to the office, though there are common threads here too: positioning the profession for the future and international development; commitment to quality, pluralistic community, and transition; strategic planning, external relations, and advancement/development; professional development, cooperative programming with other organizations, higher education data policy, and international IR associations; reorganization, inter-association activities, international cooperative structure, interface with NCES and higher education organizations, and stewardship; policy documents, orienting and standardizing committees, inter-associations ties, and national issues; focus on members; emerging issues; partnerships and collaborations; and partnering for informed policy.

One final common response volunteered by AIR past presidents of the 1990s was how much they enjoyed their terms on the Board. Here are some of the examples: "It was one of the best experiences...enriching, exciting, and a contribution to my personal development" (Mantha Mehallis); "I have lots of good memories. It was a very enjoyable time. I appreciated the opportunity to serve" (Tim Sanford); "I have enjoyed the year tremendously and have learned much from my colleagues. It has been an invaluable experience" (Bill Fendley); "It was really a privilege to serve and was very rewarding. It was nice to work with such talented and smart people" (Marsha Krotseng); "I have very fond memories of my times on the Board. There was a sense of accomplishment, but more importantly, they provided the opportunity to get to know wonderful and talented colleagues much better" (Mary Sapp); "The relationships have far surpassed just being colleagues, we're friends. It's more than just a once-a-year professional meeting, and I think this is powerful and positive" (Trudy Bers).

Rich Howard reminisced: "My time in the Association led to development of really good friends. 'The Four Sensitive Guys' [Rich, Gerry McLaughlin, John Muffo, and Don Reichard] took post-Forum trips together after every Forum except one since Albuquerque [1996]. This is modeled on what you hear from the founding members (for example, Jim Firnberg and Jim Montgomery, who still vacation together). This is the most critical thing about membership: meeting people who become your friends. We've lost that over the years and it will be interesting to see the impact on the Association of this change." One of John Muffo's memories shows why the four called themselves "The Four Sensitive Guys": "When I first accepted the gavel and said that 'To quote my good friend Gerry McLaughlin ...'Gerry swears to this day that his life flashed before his eyes given all the things that I could have said after that statement. Fortunately, I kept it pretty innocuous, but I gave him quite a scare in any case."

Mary Sapp remembered another example of long-standing friendship made possible by AIR: "Tim Sanford and Bill Fendley always roomed together at Forums (including when they were AIR Vice Presidents), and Tim's presidential year continued the tradition, even though it meant giving up the king-bed 'master bedroom' of the presidential suite in the

Contemporary Hotel at Disney World so they could have the two queen beds in the second bedroom. Fortunately their room was equally as impressive as the master suite, which as Vice President I shared with my husband, so I didn't have to feel guilty about enjoying my accommodations."

Marsha Krotseng captured the experience on the Board this way: "One of the very first board meetings I attended (in the common room in Tallahassee)—everyone (Tim, Mary) were talking and having a good time. What strikes me is how close-knit we became while we served on the Board. I remember when Board members would get together at the end of the day in the presidential suite and have a good time just talking. Terry would join us, along with some staff members (Vic [Borden] brought a guitar to sing). You miss this once you're no longer on the Board."

As indicated above, the 1990s marked a time of significant change for AIR—in governance, in expanded services, in the stature of the Association, and in the self-identity of its members. These events were part of the reason why many of us recall that Bill Fendley (AIR President, 1998–99, who sadly died in 2007) liked to say "I can't understand why any institutional researcher would not be a member of AIR."

2000–2008

Dawn Geronimo Terkla

Tufts University

My charge for this section of the chapter was to interview past presidents from 2000 to 2008. Following are the individuals with whom I had conversations and the year in which they served their presidential terms:

2000–01 – Michael F. Middaugh, University of Delaware

2001–02 – Dawn Geronimo Terkla, Tufts University

2002–03 – Richard A. Voorhees, Voorhees Group

2003–04 – Victor M. H. Borden, Indiana University

2004–05 – Denise P. Sokol, Retired, University of Colorado at Denver

2005–06 – Sandra K. Johnson, Princeton University

2006–07 – Fred Lillibridge, Dona Ana Community College

2007–08 – Mary Ann Coughlin, Springfield College

My first thoughts after completing the interviews were that even in the relatively short period of time since many of us had served as president, our memories were beginning to fade. So, I extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who worked on both this chapter and project to capture the history of the Association.

Overview

The primary thread that ran through all of the recollections from Terkla on was some aspect of managing the fact that Terry Russell had announced in 2001 his intent to retire in 2009. Many of the past presidents felt that Terry announcing his intentions to retire eight years in advance made it more difficult to govern and manage the Association. During the early 2000s, the Association's day-to-day operations were handled by the Central Office with Terry managing the staff as he had done since the early 1990s. There were increased efforts by Terry to "build the highway between Tallahassee and Washington, DC." During this time period, Terry began negotiations with NCES that lead to the IPEDS training grants and NCES research grants. The Board and Terry were not in total agreement about building relationships with external organizations, both nationally and internationally, and the result was a growing tension regarding whether the Executive Director's focus should be more internal (paying attention to the day-to-day operations of the Association) or more external (traveling to represent the Association and speaking about institutional research). In addition, the Central Office and the Board found themselves dealing with an organization that was growing in size and complexity.

During this period, the Board structure was relatively consistent. The only major change that occurred was during Fred Lillibridge's and Mary Ann Coughlin's presidential tenures (restructuring of the PDS Chair position). It had become clear to many on the Board that the role of the PDS Chair had become virtually unmanageable for a single individual. It was also recognized that the learning curve was too steep for a new chair to function immediately upon election to the position. As such, the Executive Committee decided that it would behoove the Association to have an overlap in the PDS Chair position, so they created an Associate Professional Development Committee Chair. The individual is elected to this position the year before he or she becomes the PDS Chair and serves as the chair-elect working with the chair in his or her final year.

Membership on the Board during this time period was very steady. The only two mid-term transitions occurred during the Middaugh and Terkla terms. In both instances, the elected Higher Education Policy Chair resigned during their terms. Tony Broh during the Middaugh year and Peggye Cohen during Terkla's term agreed to serve the remainder of the unexpired terms. Also, for the first time in the Association's history, the Board lost a serving member when PDS Chair Julia Duckwall passed away during the winter of Terkla's term. In this instance, Mary Ann Coughlin, recently elected incoming PDS Chair, agreed to assume the PDS Chair's duties three months early at the March Board meeting.

Presidential Reflections/Initiatives

Michael Middaugh's primary focus during his presidential term was strategic planning. Under his leadership, a strategic planning process was undertaken, and the results were presented to the membership at a Plenary Session at the Long Beach Forum. This is one of the few times in AIR history where something like this transpired in a Plenary Session. Generally, a topic of this nature would have been presented at the Annual Business Meeting. However, given the typical paucity of attendance at the early morning meeting, it was determined that a panel of Board members would present the plan to the membership during a Plenary Session. This session was well attended and well received by the membership. The most critical aspect on the plan was the emphasis on making sure that recurring expenses were covered by recurring revenues; it was heartily endorsed by both the membership and the Board. Another of Mike Middaugh's goals was to forge better ties with SCUP. Despite his best efforts, this initiative/idea never gained much traction among AIR members.

Being President during the year in which 9/11 (September 11, 2011) occurred, I [Terkla] faced unique circumstances that forced changes to the Board's calendar and impacted the leadership activities of the Board members. That year, the routine September Board meeting had to be cancelled. The External Relations Chair/secretary, Denise Sokol was stranded in Porto, Portugal, where she had attended EAIR. Everyone on the Board was worried that the Toronto Forum would be a "bust" because members would not be able or willing to travel to Canada. As a result of the cancellation of the September Board meeting, monthly Board conference calls were instituted. This is a practice that gained significant traction and continues today.

The rescheduled Board meeting was held in Toronto in December 2001. It was a Board meeting that will "go down in infamy." For the first time in Association history, there was a tie for the President-elect position in the general election. Thus, the task of breaking the tie fell to the Board. This put the Board in an awkward situation, since one of the candidates for the position was a current Board member. When the Board voted, Vic Borden was elected. As a result of this experience, the AIR Bylaws were changed to not allow a sitting member of the Board to run for office during his or her term. It was at this Board meeting in December that the Board was informed that the Association was in extreme financial distress (i.e., there was no money). It was a surprise to all as we were informed that the results of the annual audit of the Association's finances revealed a significant shortfall.

In spite of the challenges created by 9/11 and the financial stress, three initiatives of particular note occurred during Terkla's presidency:

1. Creation of the *U.S. News*/AIR Advisory Committee, a committee that continues to meet to this day. Peggye Cohen (AIR) and Bob Morris (*U.S. News*) were the first co-chairs of the Committee. The Committee's primary role was to provide a venue for Bob Morris and experts from the Association to discuss the ranking methodologies used by *U.S. News & World Reports*.

2. Creation of the Julia Duckwall Scholarship; and,

3. The Board attended a marketing seminar, which focused on the development of a brand and tag lines for the Association. While this last effort was an interesting exercise, it did not have a sustaining impact.

Rick Voorhees recalled that during his presidency in 2002–03 most of his and the Board's attention was focused on the "budget fiasco" that was brought to the Board in the December 2001 meeting. Practically speaking, there was very little money to do anything creative, and the Board was so busy managing the budget that there was little time for strategic planning. Discussions regarding the creation of a "transition committee" to examine issues surrounding Terry's retirement and the next phase of Central Office management began during this year among the Board members.

Rick also spoke about how Terry began to move the Association from a total volunteer organization toward one with some professionally managed components. This was evidenced by the fact that Forum local arrangements were beginning to be handled more by a professional agency—Conferon—than by the Local Arrangements Chair.

Terry also was successful in signing a contract with RTI to offer IPEDS training to those on campuses responsible for submitting IPEDS data for their institutions. This provided a substantial revenue stream to AIR. Also, activities were initiated during this period to strengthen ties with international sister organizations. The first EAIR/AIR symposium was held in Amsterdam. In addition, the groundwork was laid for a workshop in China, which eventually occurred in the fall of 2004.

During Voorhees' presidential term, initial discussions about the electronic delivery of professional development courses occurred. It was during the Voorhees presidency that two awards were renamed to honor Charles F. Elton (Outstanding Paper Award) and John E. Stecklein (Distinguished Member).

By 2003–04, the budget challenges were beginning to subside. The NPEC research grants began to be awarded, and the first EAIR staff exchange transpired. Vic Borden, President, worked with the Board to create mission, vision, values, and goals statements for the Association. The vision statement still exists but, according to Vic, the AIR staff wrote a new mission statement that was eventually adopted.

Vic recalls that Terry was always reassigning responsibilities to the Central Office staff due to considerable staff turnover. As the Association was transitioning from a volunteer run organization to a professionally managed organization, more staff was added to the AIR Central Office. During 2003–04, a marketing manager was added to the staff, and Conferon and the AIR Central Office staff assumed additional responsibilities for the Forum. At some point, changes were made as to who was responsible for negotiating hotel contracts and an emphasis was placed on planning on a longer time horizon in order to secure the most desirable conference venues. During Vic's term, there were discussions about trying to create a speaker's bureau, but it never materialized. More summer Institutes and workshops were discussed and offered. AIR's presence in Washington, DC became more visible, and the Association hired Carol Fuller to be our federal liaison. Continual efforts were made to strengthen ties with international members and organizations. After the successful EAIR/AIR meeting in Amsterdam, plans began for a second joint meeting, which was held in Miami in 2005.

The major focus in Denise Sokol's presidential year was planning for the transition associated with Terry Russell's retirement. A Transition Committee was appointed, a charge was developed, and the Committee began its work. It was during this time that an intentional decision was made that the Association needed to be staff run and less dependent on volunteers. With regard to the Forum, the staff assumed more responsibilities. There continued to be a strong presence in Washington, DC, which was supported by most of the membership.

No major changes were made in the AIR governance structure, but many conversations occurred among the Board members about whether or not changes were needed. Denise remembers weekly phone calls with Terry. It appeared to the Board members that, as individuals, they were not only finding their day jobs increasingly demanding, but also finding that the responsibilities associated with AIR governance were increasing.

Sandy Johnson's reflections of her presidential year include ongoing efforts to increase the professionalism of the Association and planning efforts for the new Executive Director. She also remembers that more and more responsibility for the day- to-day financial affairs was assumed by the Central Office. International efforts continued, and new professional organization initiatives were launched in the Middle East, Southern Africa, Australia, and Asia.

During Sandy's presidency, the Board had to deal with some painful staffing issues. People in the Central Office had to be terminated by the Executive Director, and there were no policies or practices to guide the actions. Also during her presidential year (2005–06), the Board decided to purchase a building to house the Association's Central Office. According to Fred Lillibridge, Vice President, the Board was faced with the issues of having excess discretionary funds and Central Office's space at Florida State University that was less than desirable. At this time, the Association had recovered financially, in large part, because of external funding through grants and contracts primarily from NCES.

2008–2010

Fred Lillibridge

Dona Ana Community College

The Swing Era

Randy Swing was selected to replace Terry Russell as AIR Executive Director in the fall of 2007. His selection was the culmination of significant effort by AIR staff and volunteer leaders.

Terry Russell in the fall of 2002[1] notified the Board that he would retire by January 2008[2]; this notification set in place the need to prepare for the transition to a new Executive Director. Every Board meeting from that point forward spent time on the transition process until Randy Swing was hired in September 2007 as the new Executive Director. Russell's retirement notice gave the Board plenty of time to prepare for the change, and 2004–05 Vice-President Denise Sokol and Dawn Terkla were appointed as co-chairs of the Executive Director Transition Committee (EDTC).[3] It took nearly two years before the Board charged a committee to "begin planning for the transition of the Executive Director with the understanding that the long-term functions of AIR will remain the same and that office location is not part of the charge."[4] Sandy Johnson, 2005–06 Vice-President, replaced Terkla as co-chair after Terkla went off the Board. At the 2004 winter meeting, Sokol led a Board discussion on the "management transition and selection of new Executive Director."[5] This discussion included the "potential for a different model," the need for a "clear message and job description for transition" and that a "draft committee charge will be made during the meeting."[6] Sokol appointed the Transition Committee after March 2005 so it could meet at the 2005 Forum.[7] At the 2005 Forum, where the committee met

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[1]Report of the AIR Executive Director Transition Task Force, May 2006.

[2]Executive Director Transition, Board of Directors' charge to the Planning Task Force, February 25, 2005.

[3]Minutes of the AIR Board Meeting, May 20, 2003, Tampa, FL, accessed February 2010.

[4]Board of Directors' charge, February 25, 2005.

[5]Minutes of the AIR Board of Directors Meeting, Westward Look Resort, Tucson, AZ, January 29–31, 2004, accessed February 2010.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Minutes of the 2004–2005 Board of Directors Meeting, Tallahassee, FL, March 17, 2005, accessed February 2010.

for the first time, the "big issues" discussed were associated costs of the transition and the AIR office location.[8] The EDTC became known as the Executive Director Transition Task Force (EDTTF), and it was under this name that the task force issued its final report to the Board and membership at the 2006 Forum. Membership of the EDTTF was comprised of co-chairs Sokol and Johnson as well as eight others[9] representing former Board members and AIR members. The task force held public listening meetings during the 2005 Forum to gather member input about the Executive Director transition. 2005–06 Vice-President Fred Lillibridge asked the Board to engage in a discussion of hiring a search firm, providing a budget, and determining the role of the Board of Directors in the hiring decision.[10] The EDTTC issued a "Report of the AIR Executive Director Transition Task Force" in May 2006.

It became apparent that the Board needed to affirm its strategic vision for the Association prior to the selection of a new Executive Director. This was done at the Board's February 2006 winter meeting in Las Vegas, NV.[11] The Board affirmed that the Association's mission and vision had not changed and that the Association's headquarters should remain in Tallahassee, FL. Also discussed at this meeting was a proposal for the acquisition of an office building in Tallahassee. This idea had been first suggested by Terry Russell in September 2005. It was clear to the Board that the existing office space in the Stone Building on the Florida State University campus was woefully inadequate for AIR operations and that the quality of the office space would not be helpful in attracting a new Executive Director. At that same meeting, Russell was charged by the Board to "submit a detailed proposal to the board with relocation options for both rental and purchase."[12] This goal was achieved with the selection, purchase, and renovation of AIR's new headquarters at 1435 E. Piedmont Drive, Suite 211 in Tallahassee, FL in 2007.

The Board continued discussion of the Executive Director Transition Task Force Report and voted on the following actions identified as a result of the report.[13] Regarding the recommendations from the report, the Board accepted all the recommendations of the Executive Director Transition Task Force Report except for a few modifications and clarifications with thanks and gratitude to the task force. It was decided that neither the full 2006–07 nor 2007–08 Boards would serve as the search committee. Based on the decision that the Board would not serve as the search committee, it was necessary to create an ad hoc search committee. The suggestion that the ad hoc committee recommend just one top candidate to the Board at the end of the search process was discussed. The

[8]Minutes AIR Board of Directors Meeting, San Diego, CA, May 31, 2005, accessed February 2010.

[9]At-Large Members included Michael D. McGuire, C. Anthony Broh, Frances L. Dyke, Fred Lillibridge, Sarah D. Carrigan, Lynn O. McCloskey, John D. Porter, and Robert K. Toutkoushian.

[10]Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, Chicago, IL, September 23–24, 2005.

[11]Minutes of the AIR Board of Directors Meeting, Las Vegas, NV, February 2– 4, 2006, accessed February 2010.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Minutes of the AIR Board of Directors Meeting, Chicago, IL, May 14, 2006, accessed February 2010.

advantages would be better protection of the privacy of all the candidates and that the ad hoc committee would be in a good position to make that recommendation because of the task force's intimate knowledge of the search process. One possible drawback discussed was a stalling of the process if the Board did not accept the single recommended candidate. The other possible drawback was the perception of lack of representation in the search process of the broader membership through the elected officials.

The Board made many decisions about the Executive Director selection process at the first Board meeting at the 2006 Forum in Chicago.[14] Regarding the membership of the search committee, it was determined that the 2006–07, 2007–08, and 2008–09 AIR Presidents would play an active role on the search committee as the key representatives from the Board and would keep the Board informed during the search process.

The Board also recommended to Lillibridge, the 2006–07 President, that the search committee include the 2006–07 President, the 2007–08 President, the 2008–09 President, an AIR staff member elected by the staff, and four at-large members. The Board further recommended that the 2007–08 President be designated as the chair of the committee. It was also determined that the Board would not directly oversee the search committee.

The Board next decided to engage the services of a search firm. It was determined that the Board would be responsible to put out a call for request for proposal (RFP) for a search firm, approve the final RFP for the search firm, and select the search firm. Lillibridge noted that the Board would need to review and approve the job qualifications of the Executive Director position. This decision would have to be reviewed prior to posting the position to ensure that all specifications and descriptions were current.

Revisiting the earlier question concerning the number of candidates to be recommended by the search committee to the Board, it was decided the search committee would give the Board a prioritized list of at least two but not more than three recommended candidates. It was also decided that the Board would conduct a final interview with the candidates recommended by the search committee prior to an official offer being made. Finally, it was decided that the Executive Committee of the Board would negotiate the contract with the new Executive Director.[15]

2006–07 AIR President Lillibridge appointed Vice President Mary Ann Coughlin as Chair of the Executive Director Search Committee. He then appointed himself as a member to the search committee.[16] Other members of the Search Committee included one AIR staff member (Norm Gravelle), the 2007–08 Vice President-Elect (William Knight), and four additional at-large members (Susan Broyles, Fred Volkwein, Meihua Zhai, and

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[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Minutes of the AIR Board of Directors Meeting, Chicago, IL, May 17, 2006.

Laura E. Saunders). Lillibridge asked Russell to create a mechanism to select the AIR staff representative to the committee.[17] Russell provided support and expertise during the search process.

Dr. Randy Swing was selected as AIR's Executive Director by the AIR Board of Directors in the fall of 2007 and took office on December 1, 2007. The first two years of his tenure have been marked with many changes in how the Association conducts its business.

The AIR Board was well aware of the need to diversify its revenue base.[18] One of Swing's strengths revealed in the selection process was a solid reputation of getting grant funds, but no one expected him to be so successful so soon.[19] Professional development has always been the leading service provided for AIR members. The infusion of external resources for professional development allows AIR to be more competitive in this sector while remaining true to its mission. Swing's performance has impressed a number of AIR past presidents. Swing has a fresh outlook and future orientation that is making us look at why and how we do things in the Association.[20]

The most significant change in AIR operations resulted from the opportunities presented by a $1,926,700 grant from Lumina Foundation for Education to provide online education for community college institutional research practitioners.[21] This grant is the first infusion of private grant money that the Association has received. The purpose of the grant is consistent with AIR's core mission of professional development for its members. According to Swing, the future of AIR will likely be faster growth in online remote education than in face-to-face educational opportunities.[22] AIR has created the Data and Decisions® Academy to fulfill the goals of the grant.[23] The deliverables of the grant requires AIR to build professional and technical expertise to develop and deliver coursework to institutional researchers at a reasonable cost. The model relies on AIR members to provide content expertise and professional staff members to provide technical expertise. AIR is also creating a production facility with the necessary technology needed to develop and deliver online coursework. Individual courses that have been developed include Foundational Statistics for Decision Support, Foundations of Data Management, Designing IR Research, Longitudinal Tracking for Institutional Research, Introduction to Learning Outcomes, and Overview of Survey Design. A team-based course, Student Success Through the Lens of Data, is also available. Future Academy plans include intermediate and advanced training,

[17]Ibid.

[18]Robert K. Toutkoushian (personal telephone Interview, November 24, 2009).

[19]Mary Ann Coughlin (personal telephone interview, November 23, 2009).

[20]William Knight (personal telephone interview, November 23, 2009).

[21]Retrieved from AIR Website: http://academy.airweb.org/Overview.aspx

[22]Randy Swing (personal telephone interview, November 19, 2009).

[23]Retrieved from AIR Website: http://academy.airweb.org/Overview.aspx

as well as courses for other segments of the IR community.[24] The Data and Decisions® Academy positions the Association to support the future needs for training very well, and the turnover in entry level positions in institutional research will continue to stimulate this demand. It is hoped that the Academy will serve as a foundation for developing the same content for other higher education institutions in the future.[25]

Swing has also worked hard to maintain and expand a positive working relationship with the U.S. Department of Education through the NCES (National Center for Education Statistics)-RTI (Research Triangle Park, NC) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) contract. Leadership changes at NCES required a higher level of accountability and a change in approach to how AIR administered this contract.[26] AIR develops and delivers IPEDS training opportunities as an NCES subcontractor to RTI.[27]

2010 saw the close of the original RTI contract. AIR started a new contract in April 2009 that overlapped with the old contract and has the potential to continue on for five years with a potential total of over $6 million.[28]

The transition of executive leadership and the need to expand the AIR staff to fulfill the requirements of the Lumina grant has resulted in significant staff growth. The staff has grown from 11 to 20 employees and could expand to as many as 25, as needed.[29] The level of professionalism of the staff has grown as many new hires have advanced degrees and professional certifications. Growth of the staff is causing consideration of new administrative structures. One goal will be to limit the day-to-day operational leadership provided by Swing. This will free him to pursue strategic relationships with external funders and allow him to be the outside face of AIR.[30] The promotion of long-time employee, Norman Gravelle to Chief Finance Officer and Christopher Coogan to Chief of Staff are examples of the changes in staffing undertaken to position the Central Office for greater professional support of the Board.

The Association and its leadership face significant issues and opportunities. One issue is the persistent push and pull between standing committees of member volunteers and a more professional AIR staff. The Association must find a balance between staff members and the volunteer Board members.[31] The whole issue of future governance was considered by an Ad Hoc Committee on Governance[32] that was appointed by 2009–10 President

[24]Ibid.

[25]Swing (telephone interview).

[26]Coughlin (telephone interview).

[27]Swing (telephone interview).

[28]Randy Swing (personal email, February 11, 2010).

[29]Norm Gravelle (personal telephone interview, November 19, 2009).

[30]Ibid.

[31]Coughlin (telephone interview).

[32]Retrieved from AIR Website: http://www.airweb.org/?page=2021

Rob Toutkoushian and chaired by 2010–11 President Jim Trainer. This committee was charged with recommending how the Association should govern and manage itself in future years.

The Board addressed the economic issues in an aggressive way by reducing the budget without cutting services. AIR has weathered the downturn in the economy that has crippled other organizations and, as such, has positioned itself well for a future of service to its members.[33]

A lasting legacy of the Lumina grant will be the improved technology capacity to develop and deliver online courses. Improvements have been made in server size and software. Organizational business services have improved so that the Association can better manage data and communicate with its members.[34]

The 2010 Chicago Forum was the 50th formal annual meeting of institutional researchers. Beginning in 2005, the AIR 50th Forum Anniversary Task Force worked on plans to commemorate the first Forum. Their charge was to plan and implement activities associated with preserving and celebrating AIR's history and then sunset following the Chicago Forum in 2010. Institutional research Forums have been held since 1961; the Association was formed in 1965 and incorporated in 1966.[35] The next significant milestone for the Association will be when it marks the 50th anniversaries of these two events.

The future of the Association is very much linked to the future of the institutional research profession. How do AIR leaders see this future? The popularity of institutional research is due to state and national reporting and accountability requirements, regional accreditation, and initiatives like Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count. They have spurred the need for more institutional researchers on college campuses around the world. The Association is well positioned to provide products and services that are needed and has come to the realization that these things do not have to be given away for free.[36] While there is a need to continue to support those who are new to institutional research, there is also a need to help current members be more proficient at what they do. Institutional research professionals will also be spending more time analyzing what the data say and translating the data to practice.[37] We really are going to be part of deciding the best ways to use data for higher education decision-making.[38]

It is clear that the Association is serving a more diverse membership with different wants and needs. AIR members perform many different functions at their home institutions.

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[33] Toutkoushian (telephone interview).

[34] Gravelle (telephone interview).

[35] Retrieved from AIR Website: http://www.airweb.org/?page=16

[36] Knight (telephone interview).

[37] Toutkoushian (telephone Interview).

[38] Knight (telephone interview).

AIR has become an umbrella organization to better serve them.[39] There are nearly 4,000 members, but AIR would be twice that size if we served all higher professional who do institutional research-related work.[40] To grow, the Association must produce, price, and market products that meet the needs of this diverse professional community. It is possible that general membership fees that are paid by all members even if they do not use all the services AIR provides may actually be decreased and be replaced with fee for services selected by the member from a well-developed menu of services.[41]

The key for AIR is to remain relevant in the working lives of its members. One way to do this is to use AIR's reputation and expertise to first train and then to certify institutional research professionals. The competition is growing stronger each year. Other professional development providers are happy to hire our members as content experts and turn what our members know into profit for their business. To better compete, AIR needs to serve the needs of developing IR shops and also find more ways to support its mature members.[42]

The prominence and importance of institutional research in higher education is evidenced by the contract to produce the first handbook on IR to be distributed by a major publisher (Jossey-Bass), signed in 2009. The handbook will be edited by AIR members Rich Howard, Gerry McLaughlin, and William Knight.[43]

The future of the Association is linked to the role of institutional research in higher education. That role keeps expanding as the need for external accountability drives higher education leaders to their institutional research offices to help find answers for the vexing questions facing higher education.

Fred Lillibridge's year as President (2006–07) was Terry Russell's last full year as the Executive Director. Fred's primary responsibility was to develop the process for hiring a new Executive Director. During this year, the Board's primary focus was on the transition, and there was virtually no time to work on other governance issues. Past Presidents Sandy Johnson and Denise Sokol chaired the Transition Committee, comprised of several Board members and other Association members. Accomplishments during Fred's term included (a) updating the Terms of Reference that defined the operating guidelines of the Board and standing committees; (b) developing a new position description for the new Executive Director that reflected the changing needs of the Association; and, (c) working to ensure that the Board was still in agreement with the position description for the new Executive Director which was substantially different from that of the former Executive Director.

Issues associated with control/responsibilities over Forum activities surfaced between volunteers and the Central Office staff. At this time, confusion about the roles of the

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[39]Coughlin (telephone interview).

[40]Swing (telephone interview).

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Swing (personal email).

Central Office staff versus Forum volunteers reached a point where clarification needed to be articulated. New Terms of Reference were developed that defined responsibilities of the Central Office and Local Arrangement Committee volunteers. When AAHE went under, there were conversations about how the Association might reorganize to incorporate assessment. Fred felt that the External Relations Committee did a good job reinvigorating relationships with regional and special interest groups during his year as President. The Board worked to tighten up the language in the Bylaws and put forth a Bylaws amendment to formalize the Ethics Committee. Fred also appointed the Executive Director Search Committee, which was chaired by Vice President Mary Ann Coughlin. The Board decided to use a search firm, which was a first for the Association. The Transition Committee recommended that this be done because of the high stakes nature and visibility of the position. As a result, the committee felt that the search needed to be professionally managed.

Fred also spent time preparing for the 50th Forum anniversary. In general, the focus of this work was to document the history of the Association. In addition to this volume, long-time members were contacted and asked about their recollections of their involvement in institutional research and the Association. At the Forum, a slide show was presented with pictures of all past presidents at a special Monday night reception.

Mary Ann Coughlin's term coincided with the end of Terry Russell's era as Executive Director and the beginning of Randy Swing's leadership. Increased funding from the continuation of IPEDS contracts, NSF and NCES grants as well as new grants resulted in the growth of the organization's overall financial position and the Central Office staff.

A major focus of the Board over this period was the successful completion of the search and the transition of leadership. The Executive Director Search committee that was formed by Fred in the prior year, worked diligently with the search firm. Several candidates were interviewed and from these interviews, the Search Committee presented one candidate, Randy Swing, to the Board for consideration. The Board interviewed Randy and unanimously agreed that Randy be hired as the next AIR Executive Director.

It was during this time of transition that issues of the governance structure again resurfaced. In the transition of leadership, the need for clarity between the roles of staff versus Board members and Board committees was evident. The increasing demands on Board and committee members on their own campuses also presented the Association with inability to respond efficiently. Yet, during this time of transition, all Board members were committed to the task at hand which included recognizing the efforts of Terry Russell for his many years of service to the Association and bringing in a new leader for the future of the Association. As a result, few new initiatives were launched during this period. A great deal of attention was focused on planning for Randy's "introduction" at the Seattle Forum. Mary Ann indicated that her biggest disappointment for her tenure as President was not having moved more quickly with the development of webinars as a form of delivery for professional development of members. Yet her greatest accomplishment was the successful transition to a new era—"the Swing Era."

Summary

The first decade of the 21st century was an interesting period of transition, unique events, and reflection for the Association and the Board of Directors. The Board had to wrestle with a variety of financial issues that ranged from having little discretionary funds to having a "surplus of riches" that allowed the Board to invest in the purchase of permanent office space. This was a period in Association history when it became clear that heavy reliance on volunteers was not a sustainable model and, as a result, more responsibilities were shifted to Central Office staff and questions began to surface about the governance structure of the Association. The announcement of the Executive Director's retirement provided the Board and the membership with an opportunity to reflect upon and begin to craft the future of the Association. The Board took this responsibility very seriously and along with the Transition and Search Committees dedicated many hours to ensuring that the Association would be in a good position to transition to the leadership of a new Executive Director.

CHAPTER 4
AIR HISTORY—THE FIRST 50 YEARS OF DATA

Mary Ann Coughlin, Springfield College

Gary Rice, University of Alaska Anchorage

One of the primary goals of the History Project was to construct and electronically document AIR history and evolution through governance, policies, and member participation/contributions over the past 50 years before the data are irretrievably lost. On the surface, to an experienced set of institutional researchers, this goal seemed straightforward. Do what we do best—analyze the data! Of course, seldom do projects or analyses ever end up being as straightforward as they appear at the onset, and this task was no exception. So, while we set out with great expectations for creating integrated databases of membership and Forum participation, we ran into many complications along the way. As a result, in this chapter, we provide you with an overview of data analysis for this project at this point in time. We view these analyses as preliminary and as work in progress. The chapter is organized by our three main sources of data. In each section, we describe how we explored and attempted to preserve the data and present the initial preliminary results that were obtained. The three main sources of data were Forum programs and Forum participation; membership directories; and electronic membership data.

Forum Programs and Forum Participation

Throughout the history of AIR, Forum participation has been a primary vehicle by which members have contributed to the Association. In fact, in the early years of the Association, Forum participation defined Association membership. Unfortunately, due to the variety of different formats in which Forum program booklets were produced, booklets could not be electronically manipulated into any useable data format. Project leader Dr. Gary Rice undertook the very time-consuming task of hand coding all Forum program booklets from 1963 to 2009. He coded a combination of activities that included Forum presentations; Forum workshops; affiliated group/special interest group/discussion groups; posters; and table topics. While in some instances, it was difficult to distinguish between categories of activities, in most cases, the distinction was clear. In the end, four categories of activities did clearly emerge. **Forum presentations** included all Forum paper presentations and keynote sessions. **Forum workshops** included all pre-Forum workshops.

All sessions in which participants were moderators or co-moderators of either affiliated groups, special interest groups or discussion groups were combined into a set of codes for **table topics.** Finally, **poster sessions** were added to the AIR Forum program in 2003 and made up our final set of codes.

A data file was constructed based upon member participation for each Forum year, and the gender and other identifiable characteristics of the participant, such as job title and employer, were manually identified, where possible. Within the Forum session category, three sets of codes were created; within each variable, the participation was coded as *presenter, co-presenter,* or *keynote* or *invited speaker.* Within the table topic, workshop, and poster categories, two sets of codes were identified; within these variables, the participation was coded as either *presenter* or *co-presenter.* To give you a sense of the enormity of the coding effort, Table 4.1 summarizes all Forum participation as it was coded from all program booklets.

It is important to remember two key points about these data. First, the data were coded to represent Forum activities. Within a given year, many individuals made multiple contributions to the Forum presenting and convening in different areas. Thus, members

Table 4.1
Forum Contributors: 1963–64 Through 2008–09

Type of Activity	One N	One %	Two N	Two %	Three + N	Three + %	Total N	Total %
SESSION								
Presenter	2,751	95.7%	119	4.1%	5	0.2%	2,875	100%
Co-Presenter	7,992	86.9%	968	10.5%	242	2.6%	9,202	100%
Keynote/Invited	320	92.8%	25	7.2%			345	100%
Total Session*	10,204	85.5%	1,372	11.5%	360	3.0%	11,936	
WORKSHOP								
Presenter	293	96.7%	10	3.3%			303	100%
Co-Presenter	711	92.9%	54	7.1%			765	100%
Total Workshop*	986	93.1%	73	6.9%			1,059	100%
TABLE TOPIC								
Presenter	251	95.1%	13	4.9%			264	100%
Co-Presenter	636	98.3%	11	1.7%			647	100%
Total Table Topic*	885	97.3%	25	2.7%			910	100%
POSTER								
Presenter	132	98.5%	2	1.5%			134	100%
Co-Presenter	385	96.7%	13	3.3%			398	100%
Total Poster*	509	96.4%	19	3.6%			528	100%

who contributed or presented multiple sessions are counted in each category that they participated both within and across years. Second, Forum papers often recognize the names of authors who did not participate in the Forum and may not be members of the Association. Nonetheless, these individuals contributed to the knowledge that was shared at that Forum. As a result and given that the data were coded from the program booklets, the data represent contribution to the Forum and not necessarily attendance at the Forum or AIR membership.

So what did we find from these data? Figure 4.1 illustrates the positive linear trend of increasing Forum participation over the past 50 years. In addition, this figure illustrates how the number of Forum contributors is correlated to the number of Forum attendees. Other preliminary analyses of these data have focused on the average number of contributors by the different categories of participation across the years. As one can imagine, the trends in these data are less clear and reflect the shifting structure of the Forum over time. Figure 4.2 best illustrates this trend. The figure compares the average number of contributors of Forum sessions compared to all other sessions. Other activities included all other activities besides those coded as Forum papers and included special interest groups, affiliated group, workshop, table topic, and poster sessions. Additional analyses of these data are warranted to further explore differences across all categories in order better understand this pattern.

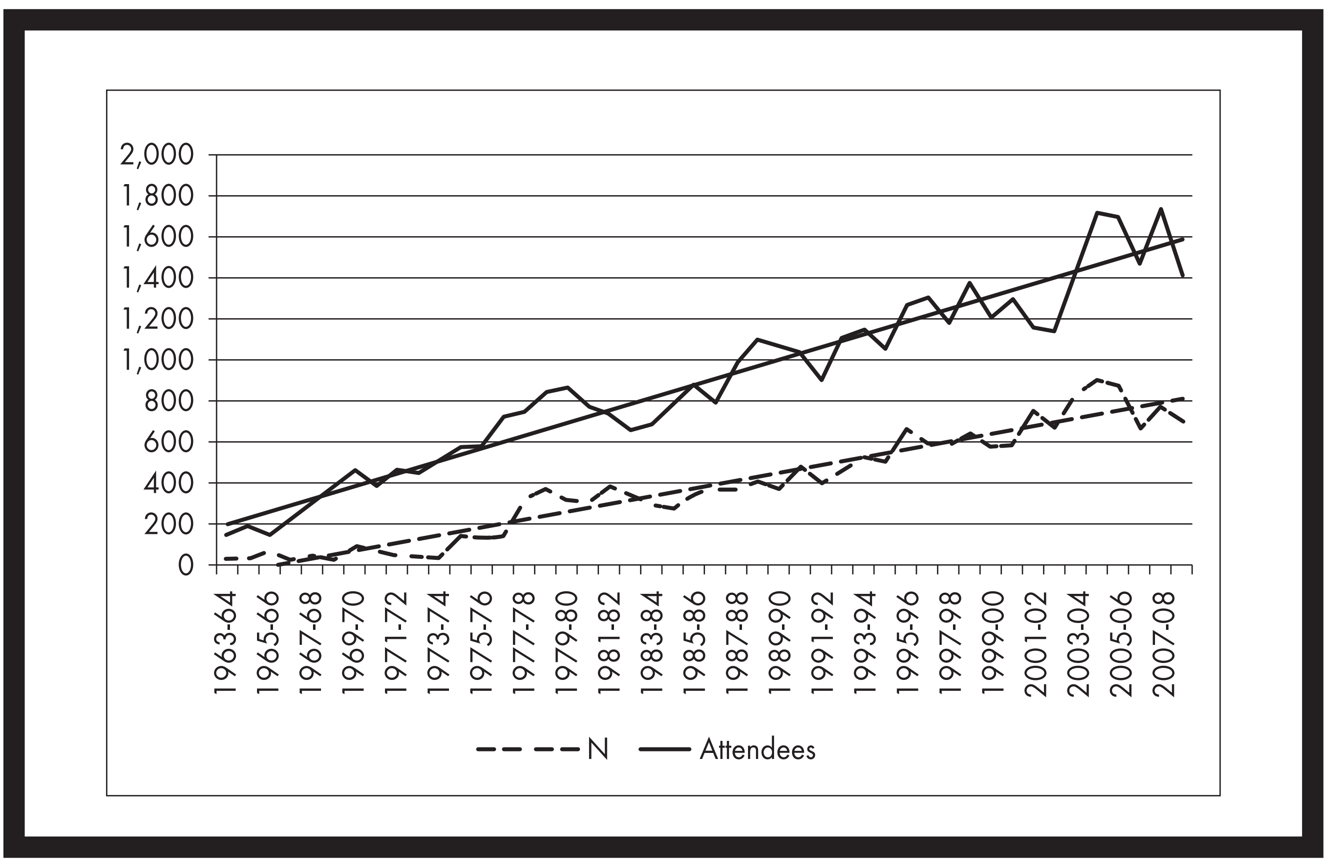


Figure 4.1. Number of Forum contributors versus attendees.

Some might ask—what is the utility of the data collected? To which we would respond that the usefulness of these data to the Association are threefold. First, and most importantly, we have collected a complete set of AIR Forum program booklets, which can and should be preserved to maintain the history of the Association. Second, we have also preserved more than the printed copy of the program booklets, we have created a data source that can be further analyzed. And third, we have created that data source using a flexible coding scheme that allows future researchers to drill down into the various types of contributions to the Forum. Our only regret with this segment of the analysis is that we did not have time to further explore such questions as what are the demographic characteristics of Forum contributors and have those characteristics shifted or changed over the first 50 years of our Association's history?

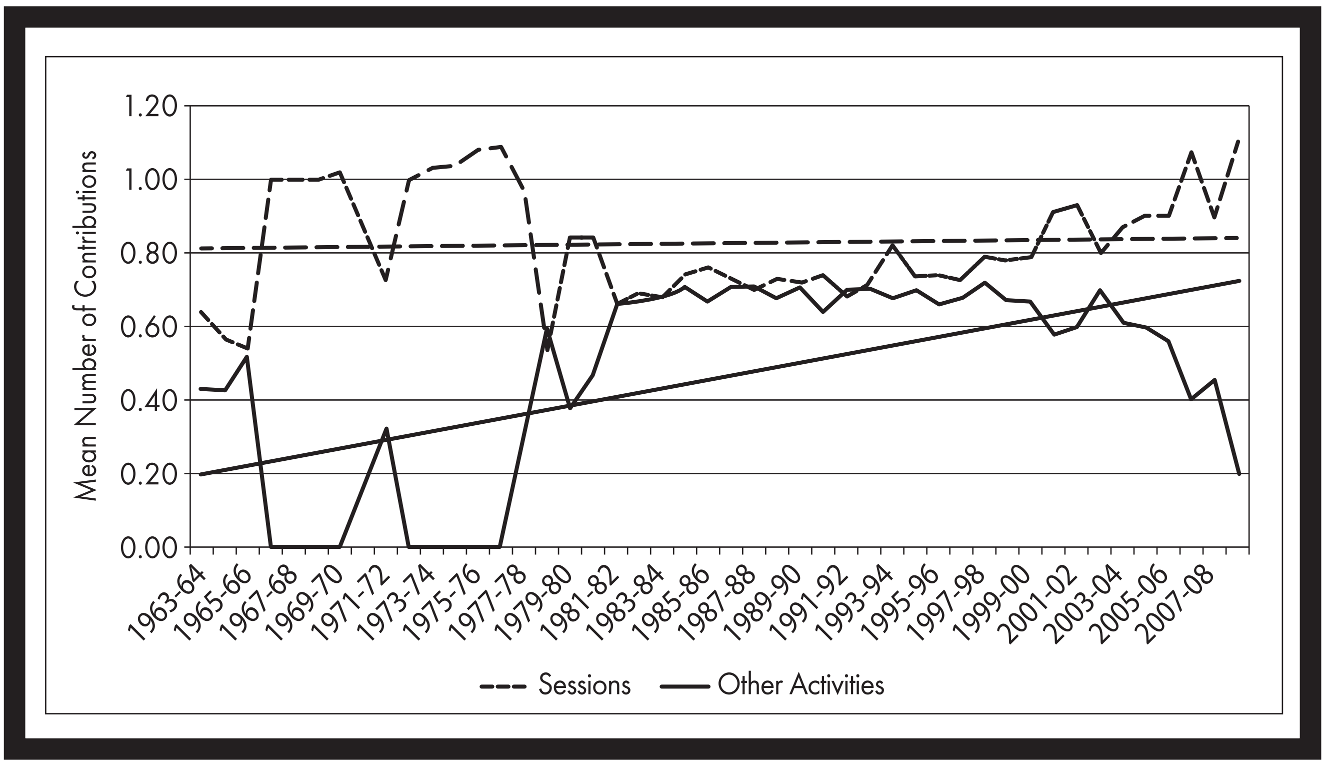


Figure 4.2. Forum sessions versus other activities.

Membership Directories

A second major source of data was membership directories. The first membership directory was produced for the membership year 1975–76. To our knowledge, one was not produced for 1976–77. We were also able to locate directories for the membership years 1977–78 through 1999–2000 with the exception of the 1993–94 membership year. In 2000–01, the Association moved away from printing membership directories, as all data were preserved electronically and the AIR web-based membership directory was made available to the membership. For most of the early years, these directories are the only source of membership information for the Association as no other source of electronic data was available.

Our goal in working with the membership directories was to transform the printed directories into an electronic database. Once this database was created, our ultimate goal was to link this historical membership database to a database that we created from the Association's electronic membership information from 2001 forward. Our first step in that process was to scan the directories into a pdf format. This first step was not without obstacles as old copies of the directories were fragile and, in some cases, it was difficult to get a legible scan. However, with persistence and the application of imaging tools, this step was successfully completed. While the creation of these files in pdf format completed the initial goal of preserving the directories in an electronic format, it left us far from our goal of creating a complete historical electronic database of the Association's membership. Our next step was to convert the pdf documents into a data structure. This conversion presented many challenges as we had to deal with changing formats and layouts of the directories across time as well as individual differences in how member names and institutions were entered across the years. With the assistance of Dr. Fred Lillibridge, Mary Beth Worley, and the staff of Dona Ana Community College, a program was developed to convert the scanned directories into an Access database. The program not only converted the data, but also attempted to standardize institution names by linking to a look-up table of institutions that was created from IPEDS. However, in the end, while the conversion was able to convert the majority of records in most directories, the data required many individual record-by-record reviews and clean-up. Unfortunately, due to these constraints, we were not able to meet our final goal of creating a clean historic membership database. We have, however, preserved the data electronically and now need to continue to clean these data and finalize our database.

So does that mean that we do not have data on AIR membership over this time period? No! We have collected and preserved summary data on AIR membership by reviewing AIR Fact Books and Annual Reports. So what do we know about AIR membership over the past 50 years? Figure 4.3 displays the growth in AIR membership by type. This graph not only displays the growth in membership over time, it also illustrates how the Association has diversified by creating the various types of membership.

Another interesting trend was revealed as we explored the demographic breakdown of membership over the first 50 years of our association. This trend is illustrated in Figure 4.4, which displays the gender distribution of membership across the years. It is interesting to note how the gender divide in our association has merged. In the membership year 1966–67, only 10.2% of our membership was female as compared to 40.0% in 1989–90.

Analysis of these same summary data sources provides a nice link between the membership data and the Forum data. Table 4.2 provides a summary of membership,

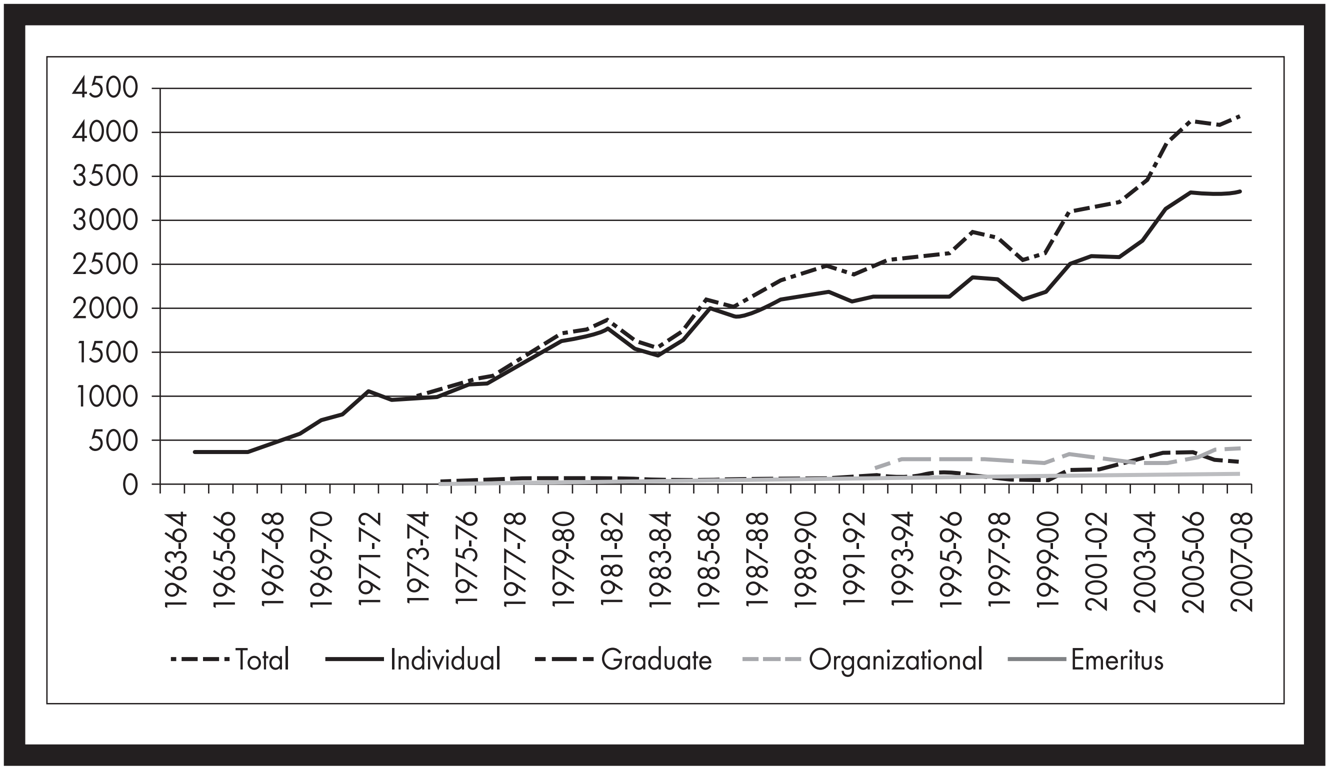


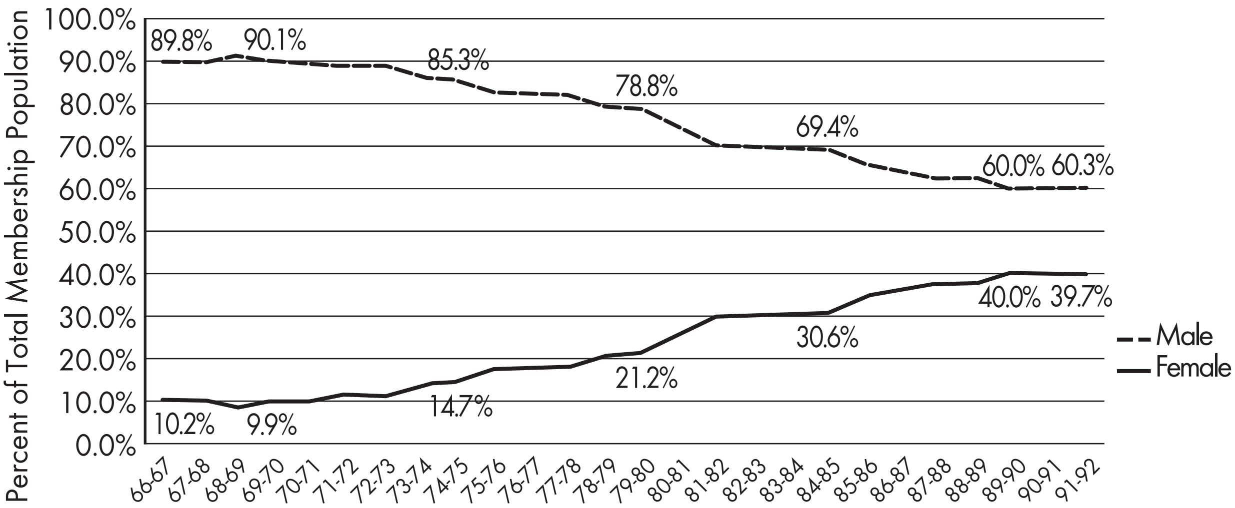
Figure 4.3. AIR membership by type.

Forum themes, membership and registration fees, Forum attendance, and the percentage of members attending the Forum. This table provides an insightful view of the increase in the cost of membership and Forum registration fees from $30 in 1978–79 to $310 in 2008–09.

So in summary, some might ask where we are with regard to preserving the history of our membership. To which we would respond that we have made some progress, but have work ahead of us. We have collected and preserved all of the membership directory information that is available to us. We have yet to finalize the conversion of those data into a database that can be used to research the history of the Association. In addition, we have collected all summary information on the historical trends of our membership. We continue to look forward to the finalization of this data structure so that we can explore important questions about the trends of our membership.

Electronic Membership Information

As mentioned earlier, in the membership year 2000–01, the Association stopped producing membership directories in print because the web-based version of the directory was made available to members. As a result, from 2000–01 forward, all membership information was recorded solely in an electronic data structure. As part of this project,



Data Snapshots
Beginning, Five Year Points, & End

Year	66-67	69-70	74-78	79-80	84-85	89-90	91-92
Total Members	384	714	1,060	1,710	1,723	2,402	2,404
Male	345	643	904	1,347	1,196	1,441	1,450
Female	39	71	151	363	527	961	954

Sources, AIR Factbooks (85, 87, 89, 93)

Figure 4.4. AIR membership by gender by annual year, 1966–67 to 1991–92.

we were provided access to the Association's master transactional database from the membership periods of 1999–2000 through 2008–09. As you can imagine, this database is quite large and literally contains the record of every transaction made between any member and the Association. Literally, it contains *all* records of *all* transactions. For example, the payment by a member for attendance at an AIR Institute and the purchase of tickets to special events associated with the Forum are unique entries in the transactional database. As a result, the task was to separate the transactional records into separate census files that represented information on all members for each year. Again, the ultimate goal was to then merge this database with data created from the membership directories to create a complete data structure of our membership for the first 50 years.

Now in theory, this too seems like a fairly straightforward task, as certain transactions for a given year indicated that one was a member. As we have learned through this project, nothing is quite as straightforward as one would think! We started with the membership year 1999–2000 as this was an overlap year for which we also had data from the membership directory. After many attempts, we were able to reconcile our file so

Table 4.2

AIR Forum Themes and Attendance by Year, 1960-61 to 2009-10

Year	Forum #	City	State	Theme	Tot Mbrs	Forum Attend	% Attend	Indiv Mbr Reg Fee*
60-61	1	Chicago	IL	1st National IR Forum		46		
61-62	2	Chicago	IL	2nd National IR Forum				$1
62-63	3	Detroit	MI	Role of IR in Planning		196		
63-64	4	Minneapolis	MN	A Conceptual Framework for IR		146		$20
64-65	5	Stoney Brook	NY	Design & Methodology in IR	382	188	49.2%	
65-66	6	Boston	MA	Research on Academic Input	371	146	39.4%	
66-67	7	Athens	GA	The Instructional Process & IR	384	226	58.9%	
67-68	8	San Francisco	CA	IR & Academic Outcomes	442	298	67.4%	$20
68-69	9	Chicago	IL	Challenge & Response of IR	544	377	69.3%	
69-70	10	New Orleans	LA	IR & Communications in Higher Education	714	463	64.8%	$25
70-71	11	Denver	CO	IR & Institutional Policy Formation	810	377	46.5%	
71-72	12	Miami Beach	FL	Reformation & Reallocation in Higher Education	1,051	462	44.0%	
72-73	13	Vancouver		Tomorrow's Imperatives Today	973	445	45.7%	
73-74	14	Washington D.C.	DC	Public Policy:Issues & Analyses	993	514	51.8%	
74-75	15	St. Louis	MO	Information for Decisions in Postsecondary Educ	1,060	575	54.2%	
75-76	16	Los Angeles	CA	Conflicting Pressures in Postsecondary Educ	1,153	587	50.9%	
76-77	17	Montreal		Research & Planning for Higher Education	1,213	720	59.4%	
77-78	18	Houston	TX	Balancing Needs & Resources	1,354	745	55.0%	$30
78-79	19	San Diego	CA	Issues for the Eighties	1,555	840	54.0%	$55
79-80	20	Atlanta	GA	Meeting Chllenges of 80's: Redirect Resources	1,710	862	50.4%	$55
80-81	21	Minneapolis	MN	Toward 2001: IR Perspective	1,763	772	43.8%	$80
81-82	22	Denver	CO	Responding to Qualitative & Political Issues	1,869	737	39.4%	$125
82-83	23	Toronto		Integrating Human Resources & Technology	1,627	657	40.4%	$125
83-84	24	Ft. Worth	TX	Revolution in Administrative Roles in Higher Educ	1,545	683	44.2%	$125
84-85	25	Portland	OR	Promoting Excellence Through Information & Tech.	1,723	786	45.6%	$135
85-86	26	Orlando	FL	Expanding Roles: New Directions & New Expectations	2,092	878	42.0%	$145
86-87	27	Kansas City	MO	Managing Education Better: Tech & Tomorrow	2,016	789	39.1%	$150
87-88	28	Phoenix	AZ	Promoting Quality through Leadership	2,131	983	46.1%	$150
88-89	29	Baltimore	MD	Higher Educ & the Future: Initiatives for IR	2,320	1101	47.5%	$150
89-90	30	Louisville	KY	IR–Coming of Age	2,402	1063	44.3%	$150
90-91	31	San Franciso	CA	Building Bridges for the 21st Century	2,485	1031	41.5%	$165
91-92	32	Atlanta	GA	Education: the Global Perspective	2,404	898	37.4%	$175
92-93	33	Chicago	IL	Higher Education at the Crossroads	2,502	1101	44.0%	$175
93-94	34	New Orleans	LA	Information Architects for the New Century	2,554	1152	45.1%	$195
94-95	35	Boxton	MA	Delivering the Message–Revolution is in the AIR!!!!!	2,587	1051	40.6%	$195
95-96	36	Albuquerque	NM	IR–Rising to the Challenge	2,629	1261	48.0%	$195
96-97	37	Orlando	FL	Performance Indicators: Define Measures that Matter	2,872	1303	45.4%	$225
97-98	38	Minneapolis	MN	Navigating the Next Horizon	2,812	1,178	41.9%	$225
98-99	39	Seattle	WA	Cooperation & Collaboration: Build Seamless Process	2,549	1,372	53.8%	$235
99-00	40	Cincinnati	OH	Information for Decisions in Postsecondary Educ	2,628	1,203	45.8%	$235
00-01	41	Long Beach	CA	2001: The Odyssey Begins	3,097	1,293	41.8%	$255
01-02	42	Toronto		Exploring New Frontiers	3,163	1,158	36.6%	$255
02-03	43	Tampa	FL	Changing Our Attitudes–Expanding Our Latitudes	3,195	1,139	35.6%	$290
03-04	44	Boston	MA	Information Revolution: Bridging Past to Future	3,420	1,458	42.6%	$290
04-05	45	San Diego	CA	Mission: Improve Higher Education	3,874	1,716	44.3%	$290
05-06	46	Chicago	IL	Effectiveness Through Diversity	4,115	1,701	41.3%	$290
06-07	47	Kansas City	MO	Choice/Change: Driving Change in High Educ	4,085	1,460	35.7%	$300
07-08	48	Seattle	WA	Adapting To Meet New Challenges	4,150	1,738	41.9%	$300
08-09	49	Atlanta	GA	World Class Institutional Research	4,042	1,420	35.1%	$310
09-10	50	Chicago	IL	Charting Our Future In Higher Education				

*Early Payment Fee

Sources: 1999-00 Directory of Members Pg xiv (Thru 98-99); Annual meeting minutes; Forum Registration Form; Participant List/Morning AIR that we had accounted for all transactions that defined membership; we then produced the census file for 1999–2000 membership. We also were able to create two additional census files for 2007–08 and 2008–09. Over time, the Association has realized the importance of maintaining snapshot census files of membership and is currently working under a system where the transactional data structure is used to create an annual census file of membership. Yet, given the time-consuming nature of reconciling transactions against membership to create accurate membership files, we were not able to create accurate census files for the membership period of 2000–01 to 2006–07. So unfortunately, we were once again not able to achieve our final goal; however, we were able to make substantial progress to that goal.

So what do we know from this data source, and what type of questions will we be able to answer from these data once the project is finalized? Quite a bit! In our finalized data structure, we have a great deal of information on the characteristics of our membership, including information on employers. Since many members are employed in higher education institutions, we could also link directly to data from IPEDS on the characteristics of these institutions. One initial area of interest was the distribution of our membership by region of the country. Figure 4.5 was generated from our finalized census file from 1999–2000 and displays the distribution of AIR membership by region.

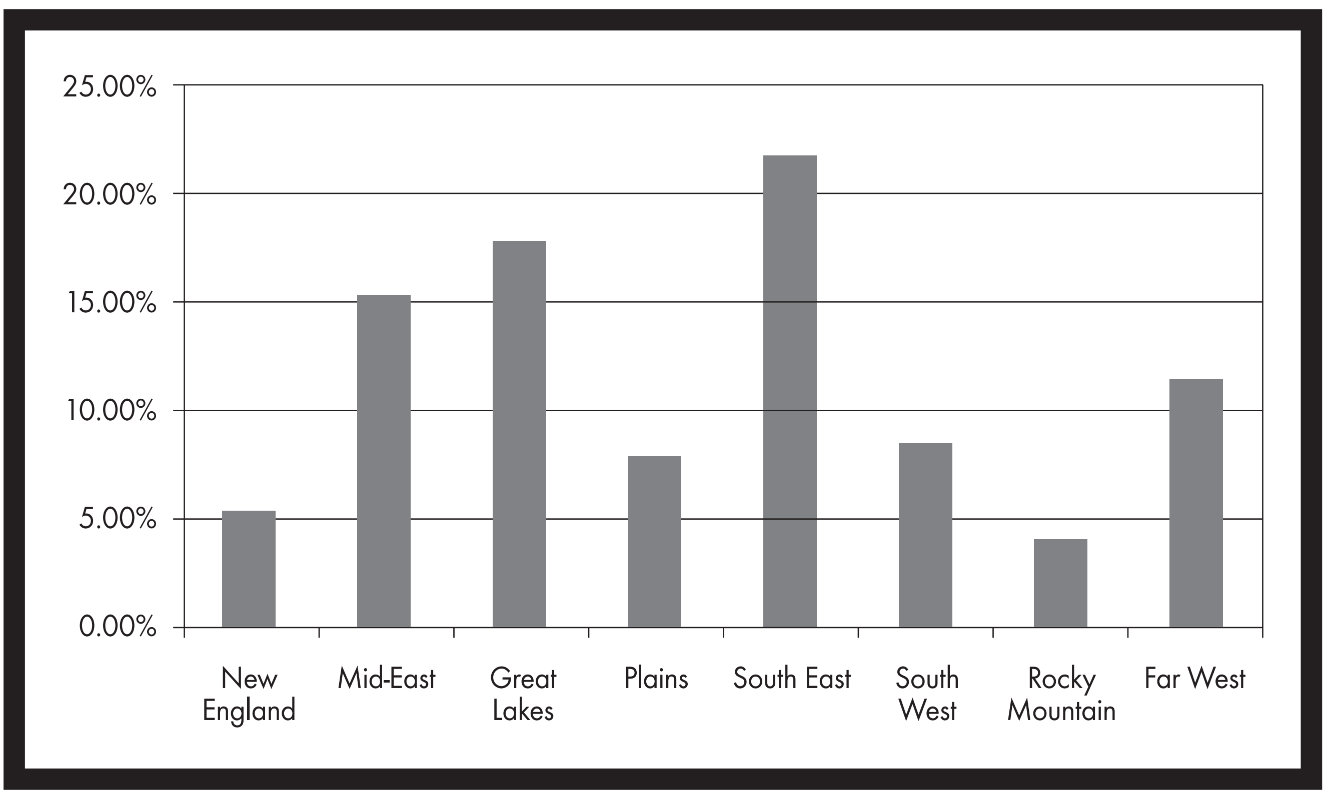


Figure 4.5. 1999–2000 AIR membership by region.

Given that this figure displays the geographic distribution of all U.S. members of the Association, visual inspection of this graph seems reasonable. Yet, some comparison or benchmark is necessary to help us answer the question is AIR membership distributed proportionately across the United States? Our IPEDS data can help us answer that and other interesting questions about how our membership is distributed across the universe of IPEDS institutions. In conducting this analysis, it is important to remember that it is quite common to have multiple AIR members from the same institution.

To create these analyses, we needed to create an aggregated file of AIR membership for IPEDS institutions that can be compared to the population of IPEDS institutions. To test this analysis, we used one of our more recent census files for the membership year 2007–08. We found that of the 3,149 members in 2007–08, all but 800 were from institutions within IPEDS (n = 3,349; 80.7%). But again, remember, we have multiple members from the same institutions. So, when we created the aggregated file, we found that AIR members came from a total of 1,489 different institutions within the IPEDS universe, representing just under one-quarter of the institutions within the IPEDS universe with an average of just over 2 members per institution ($M = 2.25 \pm 2.51$). Now, using these data, we created Figure 4.6 that displays the geographic distribution of AIR membership aggregated to the institutional level (n = 1,489 IPEDS institutions) and compares the geographic distribution of all institutions reporting to IPEDS for the same reporting year 2007–08. This figure illustrates that AIR membership is fairly evenly distributed across the regions with a slight over-representation of AIR members at institutions from the New England and Mid-East regions and a slight under-representation in the Far West and Outlying areas.

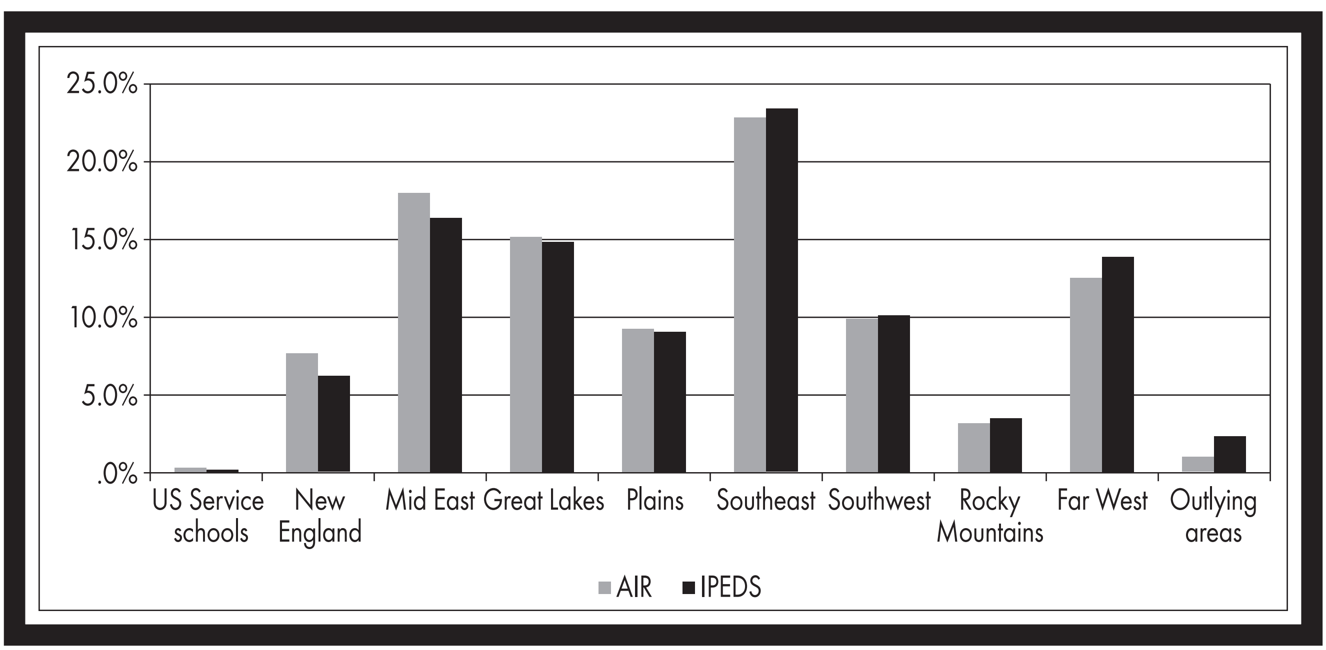


Figure 4.6. Geographic region AIR membership versus IPEDS universe.

So, again you might ask—where are we with regard to preserving the history of our membership data? And, again we would respond that we have made some progress, but have work ahead of us. We have started to create census files for more recent years, and we have a structure for creating census files for the Association moving forward. We were disappointed that we could not reach our ultimate goal of creating a unified data structure for the first 50 years of our Association, but we look forward to the time when this goal is reached. As the Association for Institutional Research and as an association of so many talented research professionals, we know that this goal is achievable. We owe it to the future of the Association to preserve its data in a format that can be analyzed to answer the questions that we have left unanswered now, as well as those questions that future professionals will formulate that we have yet to even propose.

CHAPTER 5

AIR HISTORY AND EVOLUTION—FIRST 50 YEARS: A REFLECTION AND SUMMARY

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At the project outset, several questions were framed to serve as guideposts for this project. To close the circle, it is time to reflect on both the context that we set for our project and what we have uncovered about our profession and association. As we have come full circle, we are drawn back to the work of Professor Marv Peterson and his stages of development of institutional research (Peterson, 2008). As we moved through our path to unveil the history and evolution of our Association and discipline, we have seen these stages unfold throughout the project. So, as we bring closure to this project, we would like to reflect on what we found using Peterson's stages of development as an organizational framework for this summary.

Stage 1: Pre-1955 Mutations and Early Models

Clearly, our Association and discipline did not exist, at least in name, during this initial stage. However, in Chapter 2, Lasher referred to Tetlow's work, where he pointed out that from as early as 1701 with the founding of Harvard to as late as the early 1900s, initial examples of institutional research activity are evident. These early beginnings were initiated by individual higher education leaders of the time who saw the need and value of having the capacity to produce research to inform their governance and planning decisions. Unfortunately, such efforts were not widespread, and most institutional research units existed at larger institutions only by the end of this time period.

Tetlow identified the period from 1908 to 1943 as "The Survey Era" in higher education. Surveys became the primary tool of choice to rapidly gather large and diverse types and amounts of data. While not as sophisticated as today's surveys, they were (a) relatively inexpensive; (b) quick to create; (c) fairly straightforward to administer and analyze; (d) could be used to reach large numbers of respondents at once; and, (e) the results could be easily assimilated by decision-makers. Tetlow concluded "the genesis of institutional research truly belongs to the survey era: the idea had 'come of age'" (1973, p. 60).

In the 1920s, a few institutions began to create units within their organizational structures that were charged to perform tasks that today would be called *Institutional Research*. Saupe (2005) referred to this as "the beginning of the institutionalization of the function of Institutional Research" (p. 4). Initially, the units tended to report directly to the President. They were "staffed" primarily by individual faculty members or small groups of faculty and were typically asked by their President to perform special interest studies. One could count the number of institutions having such IR units across the country on the fingers of both hands in 1957, but two years later that number had exploded to nearly 50 institutions. IR was fast becoming an institutional function at many higher education institutions in the United States.

Stage 2: 1955–65 Gestation. What Is IR?

In Chapter 2, Lasher reports that this time period is considered by many as "the Real Beginning" of IR. Important milestone events occurred during this timeframe. These events had a direct bearing on the need for institutional research on our campuses and included the G.I. Bill, the Civil Rights movement, the launching of Sputnik, the formation of regional higher education coordinating compact agencies, and the spread of statewide coordination of higher education within each state. Additionally, community colleges exploded on the scene with a mission to open access to higher education. At one point, it was estimated that a new two-year college was opening its doors every week. So, given all these influences, an increasing demand for information was emerging, and the roles and responsibilities of the institutional research units were being formed.

In the spring of 1960, a small group of individuals, primarily from Big Ten universities were invited to attend "a seminar on institutional research" prior to the 1960 American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) conference in Chicago. Attendees at this seminar agreed to meet the following year and expanded the invitation list. This second meeting became known as the National Institutional Research Forum (NIRF). Lasher clearly describes this first NIRF and its successors over the following five years and how the dynamic of increased demand from faculty and administrators from all types of institutions for knowledge about the practice of institutional research led to the creation of the Association for Institutional Research in 1965. Across this time period, attendees at these annual meetings had ranged from 46 to 188, and the themes of these meeting had varied from simply the National Institutional Research Forum, to such themes as The Role for IR in Planning and A Conceptual Framework for IR. At the time the Association was created, its membership included 382 charter members, most of whom were directly involved in the practice of institutional research on their campuses.

Stage 3: 1965–75 Early Childhood. What/Who Are We?

The Forum in 1965 held at Stony Brook was the meeting at which a draft Constitution was accepted by a vote of those in attendance, and the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) came into existence. Within the next year, AIR became incorporated as a nonprofit organization in the state of Michigan. At this point and beyond, it is necessary to make a distinction between the professional area of expertise and practice of institutional research (IR) and the Association of Institutional Research (AIR) as a professional organization of individuals engaged in the practice and/or study of institutional research. In other words, AIR is the professional association of individuals, and IR is what these individuals practice and study. The growth and complexity of the Association and the profession, of course, do parallel each other quite closely; but it is important to recognize both the similarities and the differences. From this point, we will continue to draw the parallelism between the two and will identify each by the initials IR (institutional research) and AIR (the Association for Institutional Research).

Both IR and AIR have continuously revisited the question that is the focus of Stage 3: "What is IR?" This quest is in part due to the fact that IR keeps evolving in response to the changing higher education environment in which it operates. In the stage of early childhood, a child attempts to determine his or her identity and such is true for both IR and AIR during this 10-year period. The context of higher education in which IR was struggling to operate during the latter half of the 1960s could be characterized as social upheaval accompanied by a "gold rush" of students knocking on the doors of higher education. The Baby Boomers, the sons and daughters of those who grew up in the depression era, began to seek higher education as the portal to job security and a higher standard of living. Increased funding, primarily from the 1965 Higher Education Act helped bring students onto campuses, but accompanying the money came calls for better documentation of the management of higher education resources.

Within this initial *What/Who are we* period, there was significant debate whether IR should focus on the "Academic" end of the IR definitional continuum or the "Administrative" end. For example, theoretical studies of internal institutional dynamics, academic program effectiveness, or higher education impact on its students represented the academic perspective. While the administrative end of the continuum would have IR professionals focusing on policy development and planning and decision support. It is interesting to note that the themes of the annual Forums across this time frame reflect this debate and continuum. For example, the themes of the 1966, 1967, and 1968 Forums were Research on Academic Input, The Instructional Process & IR, and IR & Academic Outcomes, respectively; while the themes for the 1973, 1974, and 1975 Forums were Tomorrow's Imperatives Today, Public Policy: Issues & Analyses, and Information for Decisions in Postsecondary Education, respectively.

Another debate regarding the function and focus of institutional research was advanced by Peterson in 1971. Peterson argued that the nature of IR studies depended on the institution and particular situation under review, and that the operational definition of institutional research would vary across institutions, depending on the specific information needed by the institution's decision-makers at that point in time. Sheehan (1971) agreed with Peterson, but took the discussion further by suggesting that IR professionals needed to move beyond passive data collection and analysis to active anticipation of problems. In doing so, Sheehan suggested that the outcomes of institutional research should supply alternative solutions for consideration by policy formulators while remaining neutral as final policy decisions are made.

Within this time period, computers, primarily mainframes, were beginning to have their impact on how IR was carried out. The transition began with trays of IBM cards replacing yellow tablets and large hand-crank desktop calculators. Some universities accepted FORTRAN and COBOL language proficiency in lieu of a spoken foreign language for meeting Ph.D. degree requirements. It was thought that 16K memory storage units would never have their capacity exhausted. According to Tetlow, during this period an increasing emphasis was placed on the development of data systems and increasing importance was also placed on creating an integrated Management Information System (MIS).

While all of this occurred on our campuses and in the IR profession, you might ask what was happening to AIR as an association? As mentioned earlier, the Association came into existence in 1965, and the Executive Committee composition was determined. Except for the subsequent addition of Forum and Associate Forum Chairs in 1980, the committee composition has remained the same as it was originally created until the governance revision of 2011. The Vice President had the responsibility for planning the Forum, working in concert with a Local Arrangements Committee. The creation of the Forum Chair and Associate Forum Chair positions in 1980 relieved the Vice President of this responsibility. Over the years, a number of the AIR presidents served as Forum Chair.

As indicated in Howard's section of Chapter 3, the first 15 years of AIR's existence included two primary foci: (a) building and stabilizing its organizational structure and (b) facilitating member networking capabilities. Initially, networking was primarily facilitated through the annual Forum. The main focus was on bringing people with common AIR interests together, primarily through the Forum. Association functions were carried out by volunteers elected to the Executive Committee. Participation in the Executive Committee was supported by each member's institution as the Association provided neither central support nor funding. This condition existed until an AIR Central Office was created at Florida State University in Tallahassee, FL in 1974. Jean Chulak was hired as the first Administrative Director of the Association and began to provide support to the Executive Committee.

Initially, the Association started by distinguishing between two types of membership. Membership status was based on the proportion of time involved in campus-based institutional research. Those actively engaged in IR were Full Members, and those interested but not actively engaged in IR were Associate Members. Interestingly, membership grew dramatically over this 10-year period. As mentioned earlier, the Association had a total of 382 charter members during the initial 1964–65 membership year. During the Association's "Early Childhood Stage" membership increased fairly linearly rising from 714 for the membership year 1969–70 to 1,060 in 1974–75.

The annual Forum has always existed as the primary vehicle for member networking and sharing of professional IR information. For the first two NIRFs, presentations were invited. For the third NIRF, the organizers put out a call for papers and invited keynote speakers—a process that has continued. John Stecklein, the first President, started a tradition of presenting a presidential view of the profession at the 1966 Forum, and that practice continued until the mid-1980s. As Association membership grew over this time period, so did attendance at the annual Forum. Attendance grew from 188 participants at Stony Brook to 463 at New Orleans in 1970 to 575 at St. Louis in 1975. And while it is true that during this time period, the primary attraction to the Association was participation at the Forum, it is interesting to note that even in these early years, professionals saw value in membership in the Association outside of Forum participation as the percentage of members who attended the Forum over this 10-year period averaged about 54% (53.67 $\pm$ 10.60) and ranged from approximately 39% (39.4%) for the sixth Annual Forum in Boston in 1966 to a high of just over 69% (69.3%) for the eighth Annual Forum in San Francisco in 1968.

In the early years of AIR, members were almost all male. In 1966, 90% of the membership was male, and by the membership year 1974–75, the percentage of female members had only increased to approximately 15%. In fact, it was 10 years from the creation of AIR in 1965 before the first female, Lois Torrence, served as president of the Association in 1974–75. The past presidents were affectionately known as The Good 'Ole Boys and Girl Club until Marilyn McCoy was elected as the second female president in 1985–86. In 1965, the membership was exclusively composed of four-year institution representatives. Gary Rice was the first two-year representative at the Stony Brook Forum, and it was not until 1990 that the first Air President from a two-year institution, Mantha V. Mehallis, was elected.

Publications have always served as a mainstay of the Association's communication with members and to the higher education community in general. The first standing committee formed by the Executive Committee was the Publications Board in 1972, and it was charged with managing the publications of the Association. In addition, from its inception, AIR has always sought to recognize the contributions of its members to the Association and the IR profession. The first Distinguished Member Award was given in 1966, the year after the Association was created. The initial recipients were A. J. Brumbaugh and John Dale Russell.

Stage 4: 1975–90 Adolescence: What Can/Will We Be?

The phrase "what do you want to be when you grow up" never seems to get fully answered as it applies to IR. Peterson, in his 2008 NEAIR address, succinctly summarized the primary IR function debate that clearly marks the adolescent stage. This debate has been portrayed over the years in a variety of ways by many prominent leaders of our profession. Dressel (1971) wrote of the need for the institutional researcher to serve as a critic of the institution, seeking to uncover the flaws and weaknesses of the institution. In Chapter 2, Lasher summarized the work of both Brumbaugh (1960) and Saupe (2005). They perceived IR in a support or servant role, providing key decision-makers with the information needed to manage the institution, which existed during this time period. In 1973, Tetlow stressed that it was time for AIR professionals to be less preoccupied with questioning their existence and grow into adolescence. However, that proved to be easier said than done because, clearly, there was a movement of change in higher education.

Lasher points out that during this stage, enrollment in higher education was flattening out, the Baby Boomer impact was diminishing, economic woes continued to bedevil higher education, and public confidence in higher education began to wane. As a result, the focus of institutional research shifted from the lofty goals of studying either academic or administrative issues to a "survival mode" of producing information to support institutional decision-making. Lasher reminded us of the work of Sheehan who described the "Three Hat Theory," which describes how institutional researchers should view their work. First, the researcher must view the world through the eyes of the information requestor; second, the research analyst/information manager must convert data into usable information; and, finally, the technician must understand where elemental data comes from and how to retrieve it.

A major IR issue of this time was the role of the IR office. Was it to just prepare and provide data while remaining separate from any interpretation and maintaining the image of neutrality? Or, was the researcher to act as a knowledge expert, converting data into useful information and, in the process, inserting the individual and office directly into the decision-making process? Another related issue concerned the all-encompassing impact of decentralized computer technology that resulted in more decentralization of information production as non-IR trained individuals sought to do their own "institutional research." The illusion that the computer *was* the IR researcher developed. Perhaps the real illusion was that the computer could crunch numbers, and that made the output automatically accurate. Of course, that illusion led to serious discussions about what information could or could not be trusted on many campuses.

The last half of the 1980s found IR in transition, again. Peterson and Corcoran (1985) pointed out, "As a field of practice, institutional research, despite some minor dissent, has evolved into a primarily management-oriented, applied, data-handling, analysis and research function" (p. 99). Late in this stage, IR began to take on a significant interest in the assessment of educational and student learning outcomes that would become an even greater focus of activity in future years.

While all of this was going on in higher education and IR, again you might ask what was happening with AIR? In the mid-1970s, the Association began to expand its influence with the formation of a number of regional institutional research organizations within the United States and internationally. The first regional affiliate group (NEAIR) was formed in 1973, the first state affiliate was Louisiana (LAIR) in 1976, and the first international affiliate (EAIR) came into existence in 1978. And while, the development and growth of the affiliated groups is often attributed to AIR, it is important to note that all affiliated groups are now and have always been independent associations.

A major debate within the Association at this time period was to define the role of the Association with regard to policy development. As Reichard indicated in his section of Chapter 3, "there were mixed feelings as to whether AIR as an organization or its individual members should take positions on data reporting and policy issues emanating from the federal government, accrediting agencies or other producers of data." Yet, by the end of this time period, AIR had a Data Policy Committee and was committed to expanding the role that AIR filled in supporting the accurate collection and use of data by various entities and government agencies, most notably NCES.

This period was also marked by growth in AIR membership and increased participation at the annual Forums. In the 1974–75 membership year, the total number of members reached a new high (1,060) and topped the 1,000 mark for the second time in Association history. Across this era, both membership and Forum participation continued to increase linearly. During the 1989–90 membership year, the era ended with new record highs for both membership (2,402) and Forum participation (1,063). During this time, the Forum track structure was adopted and has been used not only to organize our Forum but also to define the primary responsibilities and skill set needed by institutional researchers.

The world became more global during this period, and that was reflected in the growth of international members in AIR and in the creation of international affiliates. According to Reichard, no international members were present when the 1961 NIRF Forum was held. However, by 1989 AIR had 314 international members. Canada had long been an active member of the Association. In fact, in 1975–76 Bernard Sheehan from Canada served as AIR President.

Reichard points out that while long-range planning committees had existed in the Association since the 1970s, it was not until the early 1980s that the Association established an Ad Hoc Commission, chaired by Reichard, to reassess the purposes and objectives of the Association. The final report, published in the mid-1980s, contained 10 recommendations. The recommendations included encouraging external use of Association membership expertise, developing additional membership, expanding the Association's emphasis, and proactively developing year-round professional development services as a primary Association purpose.

It was the latter recommendation of the Ad Hoc Commission that also served as a major focus of the Association at the end of this time period. Due to the changing demands that were being placed on IR professionals, it became evident that the Association would need to expand training and professional development opportunities beyond those provided at the Annual Forum if AIR was to maintain its relevance in providing professional development to institutional researchers. As Reichard stated in Chapter 3, "The PDS Board was now charged with seeking out or developing extended workshops that might be offered as pre or post Forum activities, or at separate venues between Forums." And, it was later in this time period when this expanded array of professional development opportunities came into existence as the precursors to the Institute Series. Around this time, AIR sought a successor to retiring Administrative Director, Jean Chulak, which coincidently aligned with the beginning of the next stage of our development—Early Adulthood. That successor was Terry Russell, who was hired in 1991 into a new role for the Association, that of Executive Director.

Stage 5: 1990–2005 Early Adulthood. Can We Make a Difference?

As has become evident across this entire monograph and throughout this summary chapter, trends in higher education, Institutional Research as a discipline, and AIR as an association are intertwined. That pattern continued throughout the stage of Early Adulthood. In Chapter 2, Lasher described higher education in the 1990s as being characterized by swings in economic constraints. And, while economic constraints drove the focus of higher education to examining rising tuition rates and institutional costs, the availability of financial aid continued to be a central element in the decision-making process as students and their families decided, first, whether or not they could afford to pursue a postsecondary degree and, second, if they were to pursue the degree, at what institution and for what cost. Yet, a rising concern existed about whether or not a potential student could afford to not pursue a degree and whether society could afford to not educate its members. This tension between the economics of higher education and access to quality higher education drove an increasing emphasis on outcomes assessment, institutional effectiveness, demands for quality, and degree production. These factors continued to mark this era and fueled institutional research throughout these years.

Interestingly enough, this stage (like the preceding stages) was marked by continued efforts to define the functions and roles of institutional research. As Lasher reminds us in Chapter 2, the Association published the second edition of the classic volume *The Functions of Institutional Research* by Saupe in 1990. In this volume, Saupe reinforced a classic definition of institutional research as he discussed the activities and functions of an IR Office. He encapsulated this view by defining institutional research as "research conducted within an institution of higher education to provide information which supports institutional planning, policy formation and decision making" (p. 1). Also in 1990, Volkwein developed his categorization of IR Offices based upon functions and roles. His four categories included craft structure, small adhocracy, professional bureaucracy, and elaborate profusion. Yet, Terenzini (1993) challenged institutional researchers to broaden the classic roles of the institutional researcher by developing Organizational Intelligence. The development of Organizational Intelligence required the IR professional to combine technical skills, knowledge of the institution, and knowledge of the context that the institution is facing to help the institution better use information in decision-making within the institution. Interestingly enough, Knight (2003) in the *Primer for Institutional Research* noted that through all the maturation of the profession, one question has remained consistent: What is institutional research? Knight summarized "While many of us have attempted to provide an answer to family, friends and colleagues [about what is IR], the responses we often get suggest that our answers are somewhat lacking 'Just as long as you're happy dear, and the work is steady.' 'I've worked here for 25 years and had no idea anyone did this kind of work.' and 'I can't believe they really pay you for doing that!'" (p. vi.). So the discussion has been, and it seems it will continue.

At the same time that higher education and IR were dealing with these classic or perennial questions of definition, access, and cost, the Association was also continuing to shape and define itself. As was noted in Chapter 3 under the section on the history of AIR 1990–99 by Mary Sapp, one of the most important changes related to AIR's governance was the transition from an Administrative Director, Jean Chulak, to an Executive Director, Terry Russell. This transition and the early years of this time period were marked by three trends: a revitalized strategic planning process, a change in culture of the AIR Board working toward a unified governance structure, and a change in stature of the Association, which was driven by Terry Russell's knowledge of and familiarity with key individuals at national associations and federal agencies. Of course, most notable was Terry's connection to NCES that led to AIR taking a major role in the development of IPEDS training.

With regard to member services, this era brought about the creation of the very productive and popular AIR Institute series. The one constant in the AIR Institute series, Foundations for the Practice of Research, was initiated in 1993. Over the years, Institutes on Enrollment Management, Advanced Practice of Institutional Research, Statistics, and Technology have been offered. The Association has struggled to balance cost effectiveness with adequate facilities required for the Institutes. It is also important to note that the *Resources in Institutional Research* series was created in 1992. This series has traditionally been linked to the Institute series, serving as a vehicle for sharing much of instructional materials developed for the Institutes.

As member services increased during this time period, so did membership. AIR membership grew from 2,485 for the 1990–91 membership year to another record high of 2,872 for the 1996–97 membership year, before declining slightly over the last two membership years of this era (2,812 in 1997–98; 2,549 in 1998–99). Attendance at the Forums remained fairly consistent with modest growth. In the first five years of this time period, Forum attendance averaged just under 1,050 attendees ($M = 1{,}046 \pm 95.4$); during the next five years between 1995 and 2000, attendance grew to an average of just over 1,250 ($M = 1{,}263 \pm 77.9$). And finally, during the remaining years of this time period, Forum attendance leveled out again averaging just over 1,250 ($M = 1{,}262 \pm 147.6$); however, this period ended with a new record attendance at the 2004 Forum in Boston of 1,458.

What is also striking about this time period is that while the beginning was marked by the excitement that came with bringing in a new Executive Director, the end of this period is marked with another transition. In 2001, Terry Russell announced his plans to retire in 2009. And while the lengthy advance notice that Terry provided gave the Association the much-needed time to plan for another important milestone in its history, that extended notice also presented challenges for the governance and leadership of the Association. The Board reacted appropriately by creating an Executive Director Transition Task Force, which was an invaluable resource to the Board and Association in guiding this transition. Also during this time period, the Board and the staff worked diligently to manage a variety of different financial situations that ranged from having limited discretionary funds to having surplus funds to invest in infrastructure and member services.

Stage 6: 2005–Present Maturity or Middle Age Crisis?

As higher education and society responded to the changing world created by September 11, 2001, and that changing world played out with campus events such as those that occurred at Virginia Tech, institutional research and our Association also headed into a new world by the middle of the 2000s. As Lasher reminds us, we are currently operating in a higher education environment that is marked by calls from students, state legislatures, federal leaders and the general public for greater transparency and accountability. This was of course highlighted by the Spelling's Commission 2006 report, *A Test of Leadership: Charting the Future of U.S. Higher Education* (U.S. Department of Education, 2006), and more recently, the Higher Education Reauthorization Act.

We think Lasher best summarized IR in this current era in Chapter 2 stating, "During this period, where the term *accountability* was on the lips of virtually everyone associated with postsecondary education, institutional researchers kept on keeping on. Since they had been involved in the development of most of the measures that were included in various accountability/performance systems, and since they had access to institutional data to produce new measures, it could be argued that this period was almost guaranteed employment for institutional researchers."

So you might ask how the Association has faired in this stage. This time frame has been marked by the long-awaited transition to a new Executive Director. A great deal of work was done to support the completion of this transition. During this time period, the Board worked on a strategic plan, completed the purchase of a building to house the Association's Central Office and managed the search for new Executive Director. At times, of course, this road seemed rocky amidst the turbulent economic times, but a sense always existed that the Association was moving forward. In fact, more recently, the Association has experienced the infusion of a substantial grant from Lumina Foundation to support the development of the Data and Decisions® Academy. This grant has allowed AIR to build the professional and technical expertise needed to develop and deliver professional development to institutional researchers in an online format.

Over this time period, membership and Forum participation has continued to rise. Both membership and Forum attendance peaked during the 2007–08 membership year with a new record high of 4,150 members and 1,738 Forum attendees at the Seattle Forum in 2008. In addition, with the influx of the grants, increased responsibilities for accountability, and a change in approach to how AIR administered the IPEDS training as a subcontractor to RTI for NCES, the AIR staff also grew over this time period from 11 to 22 employees. The growth of the Association and the complexity of the organization have also caused the organization to revisit its governance structure. As Lillibridge describes in his section of Chapter 3, "One issue is the persistent push and pull between standing committees of member volunteers and a more professional AIR staff. The Association must find a balance between staff members and the volunteer Board members. The whole issue of future governance was considered by an Ad Hoc Committee on Governance that was appointed by 2009–10 President Rob Toutkoushian and chaired by 2010–11 President Jim Trainer." At the time of publication of this monograph, the membership had just approved to consider the new Constitution and Bylaws for a new policy governance structure for the Association that was recommended by this task force and approved by the 2010–11 AIR Executive Board. In the email communication to the membership about the vote, Jim Trainer, 2010–11 AIR President, summarized the process stating, "Indeed, the Board and I see a bright future for AIR made possible by a foundation built through the efforts of thousands of past and current members since our incorporation in 1967. I'm confident that the new Constitution and Bylaws will serve our Association well for decades to come."

As Lasher stated, AIR has and will continue to have an impact on how institutional research is carried out within higher education. Clearly, our Association continues to grow and evolve as does our discipline. Thus, we would agree that our discipline and Association are maturing. With regard to our history, our project has led us to some new insights about the need to maintain our Association history. So, what are these next steps? We have accomplished a great deal to document our past and preserve the documents of our past. The Association needs to preserve these documents, and this volume represents a first step in this process. We have begun to create a database of our membership and membership activity. We have more work to do to build and maintain our membership data and activity. We believe that a professional association of researchers is up to that task. Finally, we also believe that our history would support the statement that we will also always continue to be a work in progress.

Where Do We Go From Here?

> *I know I have not found the answers to all of my questions. The answers I have found only serve to raise a whole set of new questions. In some ways I am as confused as ever, but I believe that I am confused on a higher level and about more important things. ~Unknown*

The quote seems to sum up where we are as we draw closure to this phase of the project. We did accomplish the two original goals in a relative sense because this project provided the foundation and a framework for correcting errors of fact and filling in the historical gaps by future AIR members if the Association is so inclined. It also created an electronic archive database for future electronic tracking and storage so the future will not become lost past. Where we go from here can be summarized in four questions that the current membership and Executive leadership will have to answer:

1. How much more should we delve into constructing the past?
2. What is the Association's priority to track its future?
3. What are the unanswered questions?
4. Should AIR create and maintain an archive?

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APPENDIX A
Attendees at the First National Institutional Research Forum, 1961
Chicago, IL

Clarence H. Bagley
Samuel Baskin
Myron R. Blee
Kevin P. Bunnell
Leland H. Campbell
C. Ray Carpenter
James I. Doi
Paul L. Dressel
Theodore H. Drews
Edward D. Duryea, Jr.
John M. Evans
John K. Folger
Elbert K. Fretwell, Jr.
Gustav J. Froehlich
Ralph T. Green
Stuart Grout
John W. Gustad
Edwin F. Hallenbeck
Ellvert H. Himes
Robert Hubbard
B. Lamar Johnson
Robert Kroepsch
Martin Lichterman
L. Joseph Lins
J. Kenneth Little
Lewis B. Mayhew
Ted McCarrell
William H. McFarlane
Albert E. Meder
Lynne Merritt
James R. Montgomery
John B. Morris
Lyman S. Rowell
John Dale Russell
Stanley F. Salwak
Eldridge E. Scales
E. F. Schietinger
Thomas H. Shea
Edwin D. Smith
Hall T. Sprague
John E. Stecklein
W. Hugh Stickler
Loring M. Thompson
Gordon Tyndall
Elmer D. West
Kenneth Young

APPENDIX B

1966

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND INFORMATION FORM
THE ASSOCIATION FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Type of membership sought: Full [ ] Associate [ ] ______________ Date

Name ____
LAST First Middle

Rank and Title ____

Institution or Agency ______________________ Full-Time Day Enrollment ______________

Office Address ______________________________________ ______________
Street City State Zip Code Phone

Date of Birth ______________________ Sex ______________________

I. Duties and Responsibilities of Present Position

A. Please describe duties and responsibilities associated with your present position. If you have been in your present position less than a year, please describe also your previous position. Indicate in detail activities that you consider to be institutional research, that is research leading to the improved understanding, planning, and operation of colleges and universities.

B. If your present position entails activities other than institutional research, please estimate what percentage of your total time is spent on institutional research: ______________.

C. Please list all major positions held other than in educational institutions.

Industry or Agency	Position	No. Years

D. Please list post-high school institutions attended: dates of attendance, degrees earned (if any), and subject major and minors.

Institution Attended (Give location if necessary for identification)	Dates of Attendance	Degree Earned	Subject Major	Minor

III. Membership in Professional Organizations:

Please list professional organizations in which you hold membership (Use full name and not initials of organization).

Honorary memberships and honorary degrees held: