



Michigan Association for Institutional Research

**33rd Annual Conference
“Blazing Trails to Data Informed Decision Making”**

**November 6 – 8, 2019
Treetops Resort
Gaylord, Michigan**

Notes

[illegible]



November 2019

MI/AIR Colleagues,

On behalf of the 2019 Steering Committee, we wish to welcome you to the 33rd Annual Conference of the Michigan Association for Institutional Research (MI/AIR). We are pleased to join with our MI/AIR colleagues from around the state to learn, to share, and to journey forward into the frontier of Institutional Research!

As we seek answers to the questions confronting us in our IR and related roles, it can sometimes seem like we are performing trail-blazing work. In that spirit, the conference theme for this year is *Blazing Trails to Data Informed Decision Making*. We have a host of presentations that demonstrate how MI/AIR members are journeying to reach new understanding through data so that their institutions may, in turn, move forward. Topics from the IR trail this year include: data tools for deployment in IR, successful transfer students pathways, models and techniques to connect admissions to enrollment, data visualization techniques, and measuring and improving early student success. While that is just a sample of topics we will hear about, there are many inspiring and informative presentations in store for us.

We look forward to the presentation sessions and we thank each of the presenters for generously contributing their efforts. These efforts create the data-lined trails that we in the MI/AIR community, as well as our institutions of higher education, will follow. We thank all attendees, especially any first-time attendees, for engaging in this conference and for helping to make it a cherished opportunity. Please enjoy this time to network with colleagues, expand your IR knowledge, and sharpen your skills.

Let's blaze a trail together and have another great conference this year!

Sincerely,

Derick Fedewa
2018-19 MI/AIR Steering Committee Chair

Schedule at a Glance

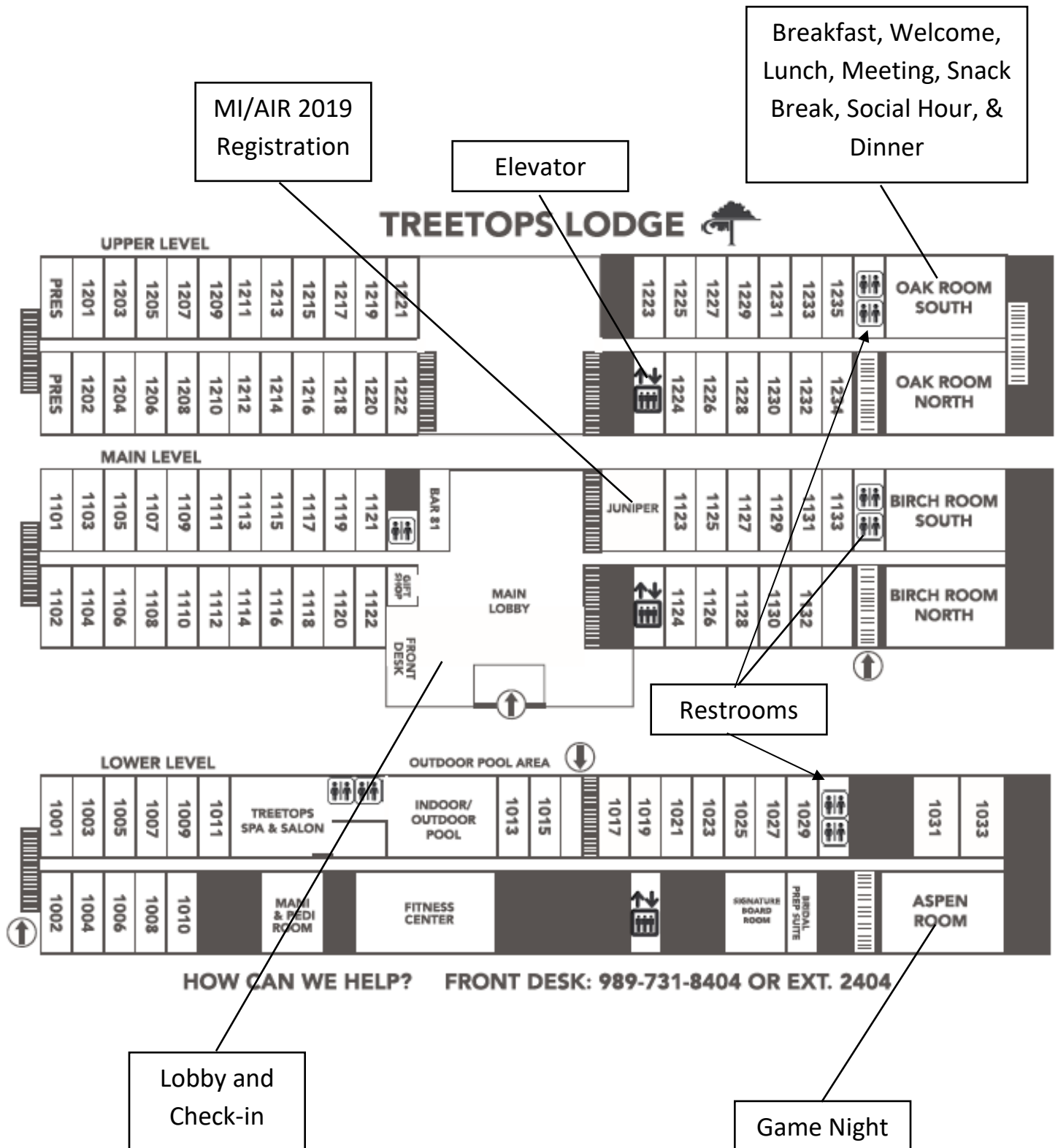
Session Locations			Other Event Rooms		
Birch North	Birch South	Oak North	Juniper Lounge	Oak South	Aspen Room

Event	Start Time	End Time	Wednesday, November 6, 2019
Registration	12:00 PM	1:00 PM	Registration
Workshop	1:00 PM	5:00 PM	Pre-Conference Workshop
Registration	5:00 PM	6:00 PM	Registration
Dinner	6:00 PM	--	Dinner Group(s) and/or Legends Fire Pit (campfire if weather permits)

Event	Start Time	End Time	Thursday, November 7, 2019
Registration	7:30 AM	8:30 AM	Registration
Breakfast	7:30 AM	9:00 AM	Breakfast
Welcome	8:45 AM	9:00 AM	Conference Welcome and Announcements
Session 1	9:15 AM	10:00 AM	-- Bridging the Gap Between Admissions and Enrollment (Wang) Why Worry When Students Change Majors? (Huyser-Honig)
Session 2	10:15 AM	11:00 AM	Importance of the Michigan Transfer Agreement (Mourad & Nguyen) -- What's in a Grade: Lessons Learned from Changing Grading Scales (Ternes et al.)
Session 3	11:15 AM	12:00 PM	Student Transfer Behavior at Mid Michigan College (Velguth et al.) A Simple Approach to Predicting Continuing Student Enrollment (Merian) ARTIS: A Home-grown Alternative in Student Learning Assessment (Lathrop)
Lunch	12:15 PM	2:00 PM	Lunch and Annual Meeting
Session 4	2:15 PM	3:00 PM	Evaluating New Program Proposals In-House (Boyce & Norton) Visualizing Student Enrollment, Demographic, & Outcome Data (Broughton & Chen) Persistence Patterns of Students between Intent and Non-Intent Majors (Agarwal & Ning)
Session 5	3:15 PM	4:00 PM	-- Collecting and Reporting Post-Graduation Outcomes (Pollock) A Comprehensive Matrix to Assess and Improve Academic Advising (Ning)
Snack	4:00 PM	4:15 PM	Snack Break
Session 6	4:15 PM	5:00 PM	Early Momentum Metrics to Predict First-year Student Retention (Mourad et al.) Increasing Efficiencies in the Admissions Office: Predictive Models (Gyasi & Roe) US News Ranking and Score Estimator (McQuitty)
Break	5:00 PM	5:30 PM	Break
Networking	5:30 PM	6:30 PM	Social Hour and Cash Bar
Dinner	6:30 PM	8:00 PM	Dinner and Activity
Social	8:00 PM	--	Game Night!

Event	Start Time	End Time	Friday, November 8, 2019
Breakfast	7:30 AM	9:00 AM	Breakfast
Break	9:00 AM	9:30 AM	Hotel Checkout (Treetops checkout is by 12:00 PM)
Session 7	9:30 AM	10:15 AM	Doctoral Stop-out Behavior and Attrition (Bergman & Feldbaum) A Beginner's Introduction to TensorFlow (Ternes) --
Session 8	10:30 AM	11:15 AM	A Formula for Keeping IR Interesting (Roe) Open-Sourced IR: Zero-Cost Solutions (Gonzalez & Pollock) --

Facility Map of Treetops Lodge



Conference Menu

Thursday

Breakfast

Scrambled eggs
Scrambled eggs with cheddar
Breakfast potato
Bacon
Fresh cut fruit
Breakfast breads
Coffee, tea, juices

Lunch – Fiesta Buffet

Spanish rice
Flour tortillas and corn tortilla chips
Refried beans
Seasoned taco meat
Chicken fajita
Condiments (lettuce, tomato, onion, cheese)
Coffee, tea, water, lemonade, iced tea

Afternoon Snack

Assorted cookies + brownies
Coffee, water

Dinner Buffet

House salad bar
Roasted redskin potato
Seasonal vegetables
Parmesan Crusted Chicken Breast
Baked whitefish with capers, bell pepper, green onion, and lemon butter
Chargrilled New York Strip with sautéed mushrooms and onions
Fresh baked rolls
Assorted desserts (white chocolate brownies, pecan bars)
Coffee, tea, water, lemonade, iced tea

Friday

Breakfast

Scrambled eggs
Scrambled eggs with cheddar
Breakfast potato
Bacon
Fresh cut fruit
Breakfast breads
Coffee, tea, juices

Pre-Conference Workshop

Wednesday, November 6, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Progressing from Paltry to Polished

David Sailer & James Morrissey

Wayne State University

Location: Birch North

PowerBI is one of the newer Business Intelligence tools on the marketplace, but it has some distinct advantages over SAS VA and Tableau in terms of cost and ease of use. While most of the discussions around PowerBI focus on its business use, it is also extremely well suited for use by Institutional Research offices. This workshop is meant to be a direct and efficient introduction on how to use PowerBI in an Institutional Research setting that avoids business use cases irrelevant to IR – we will start with the tasks common to IR shops and focus on how to use PowerBI to accomplish those tasks. Attendees will walk out knowing how to make a basic dashboard in PowerBI.

Part One: How to Use Power BI (Lecture)

- How to Prepare Data, Data Considerations, and Importing Data into Power BI
- Data Manipulation within Power BI
- Refreshing Data in Power BI
- Setting up Your First Visualization
- Customizing Visualizations and Publishing to the Web

Part Two: Make a dashboard!

- Hands on experience.

Learning Objectives - Participants in this workshop will learn how to:

1. Clean and structure data before importing it into PowerBI.
2. Interact with data within PowerBI.
3. Convert that data into an effective visual dashboard.
4. Customize and polish that dashboard.

Experience Level: Beginner.

No visualization experience necessary.

Need only to have the basic technical skills such as experience working with datasets and Excel.

Attendee Technology Requirements:

Attendees must bring a laptop with Microsoft Excel and Microsoft PowerBI installed.

PowerBI is available as a free download from Microsoft.

See: <https://powerbi.microsoft.com/en-us/get-started/Datasets>

Conference Session – One

Thursday, November 7, 9:15 am to 10:00 am

Identifying and Bridging the Gap between Admissions and Enrollment

Location: Birch South

Presenter(s): Zheng Wang, Oakland Community College

Description: Prospective students are often sending one application to multiple schools but ultimately select only one to attend or choose not to move on to college, leading to a large gap between admissions and enrollment at most universities/colleges. In Fall 2018, Oakland Community College accepted 11,425 students and 3,707 of them went on to enroll at the college, resulting in a 32.4% yield rate. What happened to the 7,718 students in the gap? What the college can do to bridge the gap? To answer these questions, our IE office conducted an analysis where we first identified students in the gap and explored potential factors contributing to the gap by analyzing student demographic data from the college's recruitment system, registration history and financial aid data from the college's student information system, and college enrollment data from National Student Clearinghouse. Based on the findings, we then worked with admission office and student services to develop new recruitment plans and to identify and remove potential service bottlenecks for new students, with the goal to increase yield rates. The Fall 2019 yield rate will be presented.

Why worry when students change majors? What MSU data shows

Location: Oak North

Presenter(s): Abram Huyser-Honig, Michigan State University

Description: Seven in ten undergraduates change majors at least once during their time at MSU. How do graduation rates and time-to-degree for these students compare to students who don't change majors? Does when a student changes majors make a difference? Are there differences depending on the type of major a student changes from and to? In this session we will discuss findings from preliminary research into these topics based on MSU student data.

Conference Session – Two

Thursday, November 7, 10:15 am to 11:00 am

Study of the relationship between community college transfer pathway and bachelor's degree completion: Importance of the Michigan Transfer Agreement

Location: Birch North

Presenter(s): Roger Mourad, Lan Nguyen, Washtenaw Community College

Description: This study explored the association between transfer pathway and bachelor degree completion. The dataset consisted of students entering WCC in Fall semesters 2006 to 2011 who transferred within six years (n = 3140). For this study, “transfer pathway” was defined as: transfer with MTA; transfer with MTA and Associate degree; transfer with degree; transfer without MTA or degree. Among first-time-in any college (FTIAC) students, transfers with MTA, and transfers with MTA and Associate degree, had significantly higher probability of earning a bachelor's degree than those without MTA or Associate degree. Among non-FTIACs, transfers with both MTA and degree had a significantly higher probability of bachelor degree completion. Other factors associated with bachelor degree completion were community college GPA, transfer time, and selectivity of transfer institution.

What's in a Grade: Lessons Learned from Changing Grading Scales

Location: Oak North

Presenter(s): Reuben Ternes, Song Yan, Susanne Condron, Oakland University

Description: Starting in Fall 2018, Oakland University moved to a completely new grading scale, moving from an entirely numerical scale to a commonly used letter grade system. This presentation details our research into the effects of this change, the impact on student GPA, and lessons learned about how faculty and students interpret and interact with new systems.

Conference Session – Three

Thursday, November 7, 11:15 am to 12:00 pm

Understanding Student Transfer Behavior at Mid Michigan College Using Predictive Data Mining Techniques

Location: Birch North

Presenter(s): Peter Velguth, Mid-Michigan College with Aaron Bauman, Jianping Chen, MinJeoung Kim, Central Michigan University

Description: Transfer to a four-year college or university is a highly desirable goal for many community college students. Transfer prior to the end of a degree program may be detrimental to some students, and represents credit loss to the community college. We wanted to better understand students' path regarding transfer, and determine a predictive model. The goal was to determine the best intervention points to promote student understanding of the advantages to completing more credits and completed degrees at our school prior to transfer. Five years' worth of student demographic and course taking/performance data, transcript request records, as well as National Clearinghouse transfer data were compiled for analysis, comprising 50 variables. Data were subjected to various techniques with SAS Enterprise Miner and R. Of the models used, decision tree minimized misclassification rates. Variables showing value in predicting transfer included MTA eligible math, cumulative GPA, whether they were ever a dual-enrolled student, among others. Discussion will also include our college's path to being able to conduct this type of analysis and institutional support for statistical approaches to understanding student behavior. A related study with a similar data set used to predict student retention will also be discussed.

A Simple Approach to Predicting Continuing Student Enrollment

Location: Birch South

Presenter(s): Dan Merian, University of Michigan-Dearborn

Description: Forecasting future enrollment can be a vital component for planning and budgeting at institutions. The task of modeling can seem insurmountable and complex. I will share a simple approach to predicting future enrollments. The foundation of this enrollment prediction model is predicting continuing student enrollment. The prediction is developed by utilizing historical retention rates by cohorts, years enrolled, and student type to predict future enrollment. In this presentation, I will discuss the methodology for the model, what data is needed to build the model, and share performance results of the model at my institution. An advanced understanding of statistical techniques is not required, as the enrollment prediction utilizes simple mathematic operations such as retention calculations and averages.

ARTIS: A home-grown alternative to closing the loop in student learning assessment

Location: Oak North

Presenter(s): Rachel A. Lathrop, Oakland Community College

Description: After years of challenges in student learning assessment, Oakland Community College developed the Assessment Results Tracking Information System. This home-grown assessment portal allows faculty, coordinators, academic deans and administration to collaborate around assessment. The system includes sophisticated review processes and tracking to ensure the loop is closed in student learning.

Conference Session – Four

Thursday, November 7, 2:15 pm to 3:00 pm

Evaluating New Program Proposals In-House – Benefits and Limitations Over Using Consultants

Location: Birch North

Presenter(s): Jennifer Boyce, Katie Norton, Central Michigan University

Description: Colleges and universities are always on the lookout for new programs to attract new students. However, faculty who propose new programs are always enthusiastic which can lead to bias when estimating the viability of their proposals. Over the years this has led to some conflicting justifications for approving new programs. For example, one proposal might claim that since there are many other schools in the state with the program, there must be demand and therefore the program would attract students. The very next proposal might claim that because there are no other schools in the state with the program, there must be demand and therefore the program would attract students. Sadly, both conflicting justifications are often accepted by the Program Advisory Council. In order to use a more objective method for evaluating new programs, CMU initiated a process for gathering and interpreting multiple data points to assess the viability of proposed academic programs. In this session you will learn types of data needed, where the data can be found, and how the data can objectively inform decisions. Roadblocks, solutions, and lessons learned along the way will be discussed.

Visualizing Student Enrollment, Demographic, & Outcome Data

Location: Birch South

Presenter(s): Jacqui Broughton, Di Chen, Michigan State University

Description: Like many institutions, MSU has been implementing various student success and learning initiatives with the goal of increasing persistence/retention rates, decreasing probation rates, raising the graduation rate, reducing time to degree, and closing gaps that exist within all these measures. In doing this, it is understood that various students have different experiences with the institution based on their demographics and identity. This has led to a need to have student data, particularly as it relates to race and ethnicity and various intersections within group, disaggregated to a more granular level (beyond IPEDS categories) as to assist in the development of more refined interventions to help promote student learning and success. To assist in these efforts, MSU's IR office designed an interactive dashboard that allows for visualizing enrollment and high-level outcome data by various student demographic characteristics, including a greater level of disaggregation of race/ethnicity data by various metrics. This session explores how this dashboard came into being, how data are organized and stored to allow for a finer level of detail of race/ethnicity data, the importance of thinking through how to display and interpret small numbers, and how various audiences throughout campus have engaged IR in dashboard design and development.

Conference Session – Four continued

Thursday, November 7, 2:15 pm to 3:00 pm

A Comparative Analysis of Persistence Patterns of Students between Intent and Non-Intent Majors

Location: Oak North

Presenter(s): Archit Agarwal, University of Iowa with Bin Ning, Kansas State University

Description: Many universities offer a spectrum of intent majors, especially in disciplines that require secondary admissions, such as nursing-intent, accounting-intent, etc. Many students who are enrolled in those intent majors make switches to majors other than their initial intention. This study uses Eastern Michigan University (EMU) as an example to look into the persistence patterns of students who claim an intent vs a non-intent major at the beginning of their enrollment. EMU offers 27 intent majors. Each fall, on the average 656 (or 27%) of FTIAC students are enrolled in intent majors and 1,780 in non-intent majors. Findings of initial analysis show no significant difference between those two groups in their retention and completion rates. We also found there is a significant difference in 4-year completion rate between non-intent and nursing-intent cohorts. Additional analyses are focused on comparisons of frequency of changing majors, student path in certain selected intent majors. This study presents some policy implications on strengthening the academic advising and re-channeling students into other appropriate majors within the university.

Conference Session – Five

Thursday, November 7, 3:15 pm to 4:00 pm

Collecting and Reporting Post-Graduation Outcomes

Location: Birch South

Presenter(s): Noah Pollock, Oakland University

Description: With the value of a college degree under constant scrutiny by policy-makers, prospects, students, parents, and the media, it is more important than ever to showcase post-graduation outcomes and the return on investment of a college degree from both two-year and four-year institutions. In this presentation, we will cover methods and strategies for collecting and reporting post-graduation outcomes including employment, salary, continuing education, and other trails our graduates traverse. Audience members will gain an awareness of and introduction to methodological standards from nationally recognized organizations, a variety of effective reporting options from dashboards to print publications, the potential for mutually beneficial campus partnerships, and federal and state efforts to collect and report data.

Develop a comprehensive matrix to assess and improve academic advising

Location: Oak North

Presenter(s): Bin Ning, Kansas State University

Description: Academic advising is a critical service that supports student success in college; yet, it frequently receives low satisfaction ratings from many student surveys that ask the question about the quality of academic advising. Nevertheless, how to measure the quality of academic advising more objectively and comprehensively is always a tricky endeavor. This study presents a research-supported approach by using four categories of measures: 1) accessibility and convenience, 2) accuracy, 3) empathy and care, and 4) referral and recommendation. These four constructs are commonly used in the business world to evaluate the quality of customer service. This study can help colleges and universities advance their advising services by: 1) providing a relatively reliable and ongoing measure for us to gauge and improve the quality of advising, 2) serving as a strong impetus for a more comprehensive review and possibly re-engineering our advising systems, and 3) supporting the integration of services with advising through a more holistic approach.

Conference Session – Six

Thursday, November 7, 4:15 pm to 5:00 pm

Using Early Momentum Metrics to predict first-year student retention and six-year degree completion

Location: Birch North

Presenter(s): Roger Mourad, Lan Nguyen, Peilin Qiu, Washtenaw Community College

Description: Retention and degree completion have long been a concern in postsecondary institutions. Recent published research provides evidence that early momentum metrics are leading indicators of retention and degree completion. This study analyzed the relationship of early momentum metrics on fall-to-winter retention, fall-to-fall retention, degree completion, and transfer of students who first enrolled at Washtenaw Community College in Fall 2010. Credit momentum indicators were the strongest predictors of first year retention, degree completion, and transfer. Among FTIAC students, completion of gateway English was a better predictor of retention, degree completion, and transfer than gateway Math completion. Persistence from fall-to-winter had a significant effect on fall-to-fall retention and was not significantly related to degree completion. Other important factors on retention, degree completion, and transfer included GPA and successful grades in developmental reading and writing in the first term. These findings are consistent with prior research and suggest that institutional efforts focused on early course success can improve retention, degree completion, and transfer.

Increasing Efficiencies in the Admissions Office: Predictive Models for the Fall 2019 Freshman Class

Location: Birch South

Presenter(s): Emma Gyasi, Robert M. Roe, Central Michigan University

Description: In an increasingly competitive market for new students, admissions offices must learn to be more efficient and focus their limited resources in the most effective way. Through increased name buys and marketing, efforts have been made to increase the number of inquiries in hopes that they convert to applications and ultimately enrollment. However, conversion rates have dropped in recent years leading to significantly fewer applicants and new students. Last year we presented a predictive model designed to increase the conversion rate of inquiries to applications for the fall 2019 entering class. Here we will evaluate the outcomes of that model and present and evaluate the second stage model designed to convert more applications to enrolls.

US News Ranking and Score Estimator

Location: Oak North

Presenter(s): William McQuitty, Western Michigan University

Description: U.S. News & World Report rankings release is one of the more important annual events for higher education institutions in America due to changes in rank giving the perception of gained or lost prestige. In 2017 Western Michigan University's Office of Institutional Research received a request from senior leadership to develop a tool that would allow him to understand which metrics affect the greatest or least amount of change on WMU's overall rank. The end result is the U.S. News Ranking and Score Estimator, a tool that gives us a deeper understanding of U.S. News' ranking methodology and how the scores of other institutions influence our rank as much as our own metrics. This tool can help institutions set targets that will positively affect the quality of their institution while also having a greater impact on their U.S. News Rank.

Conference Session – Seven

Friday, November 8, 9:30 am to 10:15 am

Doctoral Stop-out Behavior and Attrition

Location: Birch North

Presenter(s): Maia Bergman, Merle Feldbaum, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor

Description: Could Ph.D. student stop-out behavior be a predictor of attrition? At the University of Michigan, a continuous enrollment policy (CE) was adopted in the Fall of 2010 for all Ph.D. students. Accompanying continuous enrollment was a formal leave of absence policy which has allowed for stop-out tracking. This session will discuss analyses of doctoral stop-out behavior and how it may affect attrition/completion outcomes.

Professional Development in Artificial Intelligence: A Beginner's Introduction to TensorFlow

Location: Birch South

Presenter(s): Reuben Ternes, Oakland University

Description: TensorFlow was developed by Google in 2017 as an open source solution for Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence applications. In particular, it is designed as a rapid development platform for neural networks. This presentation will provide an overview of TensorFlow, how it works, and what it can do for Higher Education. This presentation is an absolute beginner's guide. No prior experience in neural networks, machine learning, or specific coding experience is required or expected.

Conference Session – Eight

Friday, November 8, 10:30 am to 11:15 am

A Formula for Keeping IR Interesting - Useful Perspective and Strategies for IR Offices (e.g. Robert's Rants)

Location: Birch North

Presenter(s): Robert M. Roe, Central Michigan University

Description: Over time, the fundamental functions of IR offices can become mundane and tedious. Add to this the large number of daily irritants and IR as a career can lose its admittedly limited appeal. However, with the right perspective, every day in the office can be an adventure. The fundamental approach in our office is to treat tasks and requests with a combination of respect and irreverence as defined by the following formula: $\text{perspective} = x \cdot \text{respect} + (1-x) \cdot \text{irreverence}$ (where $0 \leq x \leq 1$). The key is finding the appropriate value of x for each situation. A request from the president may warrant a large value such as .95 whereas an external request may be as low as .01. As $x \rightarrow 0$, a series of rants about the absurdity of situations arise. A long list of specific irritants and their corresponding rants will be discussed (e.g. fake familiarity – Rob instead of Robert). On a more serious note, effective strategies for working with colleagues both inside and outside of the office will be covered making the presentation relevant to offices as small as 1 FTE.

Open-Sourced IR: Zero-Cost Solutions for Data Management, Analytics, and Reporting

Location: Birch South

Presenter(s): John Gonzalez, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor with Noah Pollock, Oakland University

Description: Regardless of size or organizational resources, we all aim to minimize costs and maximize productivity. Unfortunately, those maxims are often at odds with each other. For example, enterprise ready software for analytics or reporting such as SPSS or Tableau can cost an IR office thousands to tens of thousands of dollars per year alone. However, free and open-source tools exist that are relied on and trusted by industry and government alike, and they are justifiable alternatives to paid and proprietary tools. In this interactive presentation, we provide a proof of concept that an IR office can eliminate software costs while continuing or improving functionality by relying exclusively on free and open-source software. We will demonstrate how multiple open-source tools can successfully integrate to host, manage, analyze, and report data. We also hope to convey that the learning curve is not insurmountable. We walk participants through a demo of the entire process which includes Linux (operating system to host data), MySQL Database (a DBMS to store and manage data), and R (to manage, analyze, and report data).

MI/AIR Business Meeting

Thursday, November 7, 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Oak South

Agenda:

- I. Call meeting to order..... Derick Fedewa
- II. Set agenda..... Membership
- III. Acknowledgments..... Derick Fedewa
 - A. Best Presentation 2018..... Jacqui Broughton
- IV. Report of conference attendance..... Mary Meier
- V. Treasurer's report..... Mary Meier
- VI. Action items from membership..... Derick Fedewa
- VII. Other Business..... Derick Fedewa
- VIII. Steering Committee composition..... Derick Fedewa & Noah Pollock
 - A. Announcement of 2020 Chair and Chair-elect
 - B. Nominations for membership
- IX. Future conferences..... Noah Pollock, Maia Bergman, & Joy Evans
 - A. Announce 2019-20 site
 - B. Announce 2020-21 site

2018-19 Steering Committee Members

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Notes

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Mark your Calendars!

**2020 MI/AIR Conference
November 4 – 6, 2020
Traverse City, Michigan**

We're looking for a theme!
Do you know a dynamic keynote speaker?
What should be our focus next year?
What are your burning issues?
What do you want to learn?

**The 2019-20 Steering Committee wants to provide you
with a relevant, worthwhile, and fun conference.
Let us know how we can best do that!**

Please email committee@miair.org with your ideas.