

Volume 14, Number 2 Spring 2007 Abstracts

Connecting Silos: Use of Institutional Action Research for Integrating Disparate Student Success Initiatives

[Tom Pilarzyk](#) and [Yan Wang](#), Milwaukee Area Technical College

Action research can play an important role in institutional research endeavors to improve the quality of organizational performance in higher education. This article outlines how the action research perspective informed a research design that integrated fragmented and isolated student success initiatives at a large urban two-year institution where increasing accountability is demanded. It also highlights how empirically assessing the impact of factors extraneous to education can be guided by a common working model which integrates them with the needs of student success initiatives. In conclusion, the authors advocate for greater recognition of institutional action research within the profession while remaining cognizant of the organizational factors that must be present to make such an expanded role possible and successful.

What Goes Around Comes Around: Using the Malcolm Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence

[Kathryn K. Eggleston](#), [Mary Frances Gibbons](#), and [Fonda Vera](#), Richland College

This article describes Richland College's Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award-winning Performance Excellence Model. Richland's leadership team uses systematic strategic and operational approaches to improve performance. These approaches mirror Richland's vision, mission, values, and goals and reflect their approach-deploy-learn-integrate philosophy. The authors discuss methodology, successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. They also suggest generic guidelines for others to create their own performance excellence models.

Freshmen Dropouts

[Jim Barr](#), American River College

This study examines second-term and second-year persistence of 19,489 freshmen at American River College (ARC), a large, urban, public community college near Sacramento, California. Academic and non-academic characteristics are compared between first year dropouts and those students that enroll one year after the first fall term at ARC for two cohorts: recent high school graduates and other first-time freshmen. Findings show the most distinguishing characteristic freshmen dropouts share is low academic performance as

measured by grade distribution and overall course success. Based on previous research on student support programs such as Beacon and Reading Across the Disciplines, the author recommends applying How to Learn strategies across the curriculum to improve student persistence and student success.

Writing and Publishing a Research Paper in a Peer-Reviewed Journal

[Stephen R. Porter](#), Iowa State University

Writing and publishing a research paper in a peer-reviewed journal is a complicated process. This paper tries to take some of the mystery out of that process by describing how a good research paper should be structured, and how the journal submission process works.

Use of Web Technology to Access and Update College Plans

[Edward J. Valeau](#), Hartnell College

[Jing Luan](#), San Mateo County Community College District

In this study, the process and outcome of a web-based planning application, called Ports of Call, are discussed. The application allows college management to create, edit, and report out activities relating to college plans, all through a web browser. Its design was based on best practices in modern web technology and the application can be easily implemented in any setting. Its openness and ease of use invite clear inspection of the college's goal achievement by the general public and provide just-in-time feedback for rapid change. The study identifies four advantages in using the tool.

An Examination of Mediators and Moderators in Applied Research

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Researchers are being asked to conduct more complex analyses to add clarity and confidence in decision-making. This is especially true for researchers in the community college systems as they serve a more non-traditional student and are more likely to also serve at-risk populations. In this article we distinguish between moderators and mediators as a powerful and substantive approach to studying student integration. More specifically, our study demonstrates the analytical process of investigating affective commitment of community college students as either a moderator or mediator on the relationship between the ability to self-regulate learning and student integration.

Community College Fiscal Policy: Recent Literature

[Rozana Carducci](#), UCLA Community College Studies (no abstract).