

## **Institutional Research & Assessment**

### **A History**

In 1971, Southeastern Louisiana University established an Office of Institutional Research. The following is a chronology since 1983.

- 1983: Institutional Research staff consisted of a Director (Dr. Randall Webb) and a Secretary. The Director reported to the President. The functions of the office were to implement EEO compliance and reporting, to maintain minutes for key campus committees (e.g., Academic Affairs, Graduate Council) and to prepare HEGIS and other mandated reports.
- 1984: A new Director (Dr. James Davis) was appointed, and the office's functions changed. New top-level administrators needed information for planning and evaluation purposes, and Institutional Research was assigned the role of providing that information. The office also was given responsibility for maintaining the University's facilities database and for submitting facilities and space utilization reports to the Board of Regents. The Director's minute-taking function for various committees was phased out.
- 1985: A faculty member in Economics (Henry Thomasson) was re-assigned to serve as a half-time Research Associate (his teaching duties were reduced). In addition, a full-time Research Associate position was approved (filled by Dr. Constance Smith). The practice of systematically extracting data from the Student Record System and from the Payroll/Personnel database and of using these computerized extract files for research was instituted.
- 1986: Responsibilities for EEO compliance and reporting were transferred to another office. I.R.E. acquired its first PC. Dr. Davis spearheaded planning the University's assessment program. The words "and Evaluation" were added to office's name.
- 1987, 1988: Projects grew in number and scope as the office's technological capabilities increased. Involvement in assessment activities -- particularly surveys and proficiency testing -- continued to require substantial time and effort.
- 1989: The half-time Research Associate position was changed to full-time, and Mr. Thomasson returned to full-time teaching. In order to better meet changing needs in the office, the secretarial position was replaced with a "mini-computer programmer". Dr. Davis resigned as Director in December, 1989.
- 1990: A new Director was hired (Dr. Ben Showalter), and the vacant Research Associate position was filled (Dr. Anna Waggener). The University's Honeywell mainframe computer was replaced with a VAX, improving the productivity of the Research Associates. Assessment activities continued to increase.

- 1991: A management intern position was approved which enabled the office to hire a statistical Assistant (Donald Boeckman). There had been frequent turn over in the “mini-computer programmer” position due to the low salary, and so it was discontinued.
- 1992: Dr. Waggener was assigned to devote 25% of her time to meeting the information needs of the SACS Research Committee.
- 1992-1993: The University hired a Director of Assessment, but I.R.E. continued to be responsible for assessment-related survey projects. A half-time secretarial position was approved (Cora Von Aspern). The Provost assumed supervisory authority over the I.R.E. Director.
- 1993-1994: The SACS Coordinator's position occupied by Ms. Dennis Watts was disbanded and her position was allocated to the Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation. In October 1993, Mr. Donald Boeckman applied and was accepted to a research associate position in the Office. Mr. Boeckman filled Ms. Watts old position. Ms. Lori Fairburn was hired in January 1994 to fill the position of statistical assistant vacated by Mr. Boeckman. Dr. Anna Waggener resigned from the university in January 1994 to take a position as a research associate with the University of South Alabama. Dr. Constance Smith took on a role of planning and policy analysis and was reporting to the Provost's office. Her position was still allocated to Institutional Research and Evaluation.
- 1994-1995: Dr. Smith resigned from the University in August 1994 to start up and become the director of Institutional Research at Purdue University, Calumet. The director of the Office Of Assessment, Dr. Shelia Chauvin, resigned from the university in April 1995 to take a position with Tulane Medical Center in New Orleans. The Office of Assessment was disbanded.
- 1995-1996: Dr. Beatrice Baldwin became director and the name of the office was changed to Institutional Research and Assessment. Dr. Ben Showalter moved into a Research Associate position and Dr. Michelle Hall was hired in the other Research Associate position. The office became responsible for institutional effectiveness for the university. Part of the duties included spearheading the strategic planning process, coordinating and implementing the university survey process, and working with departments on Major Field Assessment. Ms. Glenda White was hired as a Word Processor Operator to assist with the institutional effectiveness efforts.
- 1996-1997: In October, Ms. Lisa McAllister was hired in the Research Associate position vacated by Dr. Ben Showalter. In January, the office cleaned out years worth of data, papers, reports, etc. and packed everything up and moved into new offices in McGehee Hall, the first academic building on campus. In June, Ms. McAllister resigned. The office took over responsibility for the Student Opinion of Teaching

process and Ms. Tina Hensley was hired to coordinate that process.

- 1997-1998: In August, Dr. Chand Wije was hired in the Research Associate position vacated by Lisa McAllister. In October, the Profile won the award for Best Mini-Fact Book at the annual SAIR Conference. In November a new position, Institutional Database Coordinator, was created and filled by Ms. Lori Fairburn. Tina Hensley resigned and in December Ms. Glenda White took over responsibility for the administration of the SOTs. In March, Ms. Lisa Owens was hired as the new Word Processor Operator. During the year, SSPS for Windows was acquired and the staff began utilizing it in addition to the Vax version of SSPS.
- 1998-1999: In July, Ms. Lisa Owens and Dr. Chand Wije resigned. In August, Mr. Kenneth Smith was hired in the Statistical Assistant position vacated by Ms. Lori Fairburn. In August, Ms. Lana Ashcraft was hired in the vacant Word Processor Operator position, from which she resigned in October. In October, the Profile won the award for Best Mini-Fact Book at the annual SAIR Conference. The end of October, Ms. Julie Durel was hired in the vacant Word Processor Operator position. In January, Dr. Elizabeth Atkinson was hired to fill the vacant Research Associate position. During the academic year, Dr. Baldwin was put in charge of Project Leo, the preparation for and rollout of our new administrative system, PeopleSoft.
- 1999-2000: In September, Ms. Julie Durel resigned (to go work as a Secretary II in Purchasing) and in November Ms. Tina Wainwright was hired in that position. In January, Dr. Beatrice Baldwin became the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dr. Michelle Hall became Interim Director of Institutional Research and Assessment. During the Spring semester, an electronic time-keeping system, TimeCentre, was introduced by the university and the HR portion of PeopleSoft went live.
- 2000-2001: During the summer, the office prepared for the student record portion of PeopleSoft to go live in the Fall. In addition, the university underwent a major academic reorganization and selective admissions was implemented for the first time. In September Ms. Lori Fairburn accepted a position as the Associate Director of Records and Registration. Also in September, Ms. Cora Von Aspern moved to Dr. Baldwin's office and Ms. Tina Wainwright moved into the Secretary II position. The Word Operator position was discontinued. In October, the Profile won the award for Best Mini-Fact Book at the annual SAIR Conference. Somehow, the office survived Fall 2000. In February, Dr. Elizabeth Atkinson resigned to take a position closer to home in Baton Rouge.
- 2001-2002: In September, Mr. Vinay Ramachandra was hired in the Institutional Database

Coordinator position, and Mr. Kenny Smith moved from the Statistical Assistant position to the vacant Research Associate position. October, Ms. Tina Wainwright resigned and Ms. Mickey Inman filled the Secretary II position. In December, Mr. Jacob Jasin was hired in the Statistical Assistant position. During the year changes in the new SACS criteria were reviewed with trepidation, but after review, a committee felt that Southeastern is in good shape for our visit in Spring 2005.

- 2002-2003: In August, Ms. Mickey Inman retired. In October, Ms. Gertie Hyde was hired in the Secretary II position. Mr. Donald Boeckman was the technology guru for the AIR Forum in Tampa.
- 2003-2004: SACS began in earnest and the office was very involved. Dr. Michelle Hall was elected SAIR Treasurer, and Mr. Donald Boeckman finished his technology guru term at the AIR Forum in Boston. Fall 2003 appeared with the highest enrollment in Southeastern history, we are still not sure where we put all those students. In October, the Profile won the award for Best Mini-Fact Book at the annual SAIR Conference.
- 2004-2005: Ms. Gertie Hyde moved to Public Information, and Ms. Priscilla Potts was hired in the Secretary II position. In August the parking lot in front of McGeehee was reopened after being closed for more than two years. It is the little things in life we take pleasure from. In November, Ms. Potts left and in March, Ms. Allison Blache was hired in the Administrative Assistant II position. Ms. Blache was thrown into the fire, she started only a week before SACS came to campus to visit, but decided to stay with us for a while any ways. In April, Mr. Donald Boeckman was elected as the LAIR Treasurer.
- 2005-2006: This year was remembered as the year Katrina hit on August 29, 2005 a week after classes started. No one in the office suffered any major damage, but we were given many opportunities for challenges. With the loss of over a week of classes, the calendar was pushed back and our first task was to try and determine the 14<sup>th</sup> class day. The only school in the country to take in more displaced students was LSU, Southeastern worked hard to accommodate those students as well as our own. There was a lot of uncertainty, but we made it through with a Fall enrollment of over 16,000. In October, the Profile won the award for Best Mini-Fact Book at the annual SAIR Conference. In Spring 2006, Dr. Michelle Hall was elected as the AIR Associate Forum Chair. Also in the Spring, the University Planning Council developed Vision 2010, a set of strategic priorities to guide our planning for the next 5 years.
- 2006-2007: In July, Ms. Allison Blache left the office for a higher position elsewhere on

campus. August was a busy month for the office. Ms. Tina Hull was hired in the Administrative Assistant II position in August. Also in August, Mr. Kenneth Smith moved to Massachusetts to take the Director's position at Worcester State College. Finally (but definitely not least), in August Mr. Donald Boeckman was promoted to Senior Research Associate. At the SAIR conference in October, Mr. Donald Boeckman was awarded the Unsung Hero Award, for which he was very deserving and we were all quite proud. In October, the Profile won the award for Best Mini-Fact Book at the annual SAIR Conference.

Sources:

1983-1992: Report prepared by Connie Smith.

1993-1995: Donald Boeckman

1995-current: Michelle Hall