

2025 CONFERENCE PROGRAM

— NEAIR —

52ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE | NORTH BETHESDA, MD | NOVEMBER 8-11, 2025



EMPOWERING

INNOVATION

ENHANCING IR/IE THROUGH AI AND AUTOMATION

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Event Agenda

NEAIR 52nd Annual Conference (2025)

Saturday, November 08, 2025

Conference Registration & Information

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM | Location: Lower Level Registration Desk

Grow Your Analytics Arsenal: Learn How to Use R in IR (Part I)

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Glen Echo

This workshop will introduce participants to R, R Studio, and useful R packages in wrangling, analyzing, and visualizing data. The workshop will demonstrate various ways participants can use R in their IR work, which participants will be able to practice throughout the session. This workshop is primarily designed for those new to R or those with limited experience, although all are welcome. The workshop will feature instructions for setting up R and R Studio and introduce the analytic and visualization tools in R that are useful in institutional research. Participants in the workshop will have the opportunity to practice the skills introduced through actual real-time coding. Participants will be able to learn from each other and ask questions throughout the workshop. The workshop will also highlight some advanced use cases of R in IR work for those interested in continuing their journey.

Intended Audience: Anyone interested in learning R.

Equipment Needed: Laptop with R, RStudio (time in session will be devoted to downloading). Also available here: <https://posit.co/downloads/>

Presenter: Marianne Bujacich, Georgetown University

Cost: \$270. Limited to 24 participants.

Saturday, November 8: 9:00 am - NOON; 1:00-4:00 pm (two 3-hour sessions with a break for lunch)

Speaker



Marianne Bujacich

Institutional Research Analyst | Georgetown University

Statistics for Higher Education (Part 1)

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Oakley

This two-part workshop will provide an overview of how statistical analysis can be used to examine problems encountered in higher education and institutional research.

The first three-hour session (Part I; Saturday 9-Noon) covers what would be taught in an introductory statistics course. We will review how to use statistics to summarize data, discuss probabilities and how they are connected to statistics, and finally combine all these concepts to conduct hypothesis tests for means of variables in higher education.

The second three-hour session (Part II; Sunday 1-4 PM) covers what would be taught in a second-level course on regression analysis. We will discuss the notion of correlation and how this relates to a linear regression model. We will then apply linear regression analysis to a range of higher education examples.

The format will include lecture / discussion of statistical concepts, and hands-on practice using a statistics program (Stata) to do analyses. Participants will come away with an understanding of statistical analysis and have insights into how they might use these tools to examine issues in their IR jobs.

Intended Audience: The workshop is open to participants regardless of whether they have had statistics before. Those who are nervous about math are especially welcome!

Equipment Needed: Laptop with Stata/BE or Stata/SE.

Presenter: Rob Toutkoushian, University of Georgia

Cost: \$270. Limited to 24 participants.

This is a 6 hour workshop split over two days:
Saturday, November 8: 9:00 am-NOON (3 hours)
Sunday, November 9: 1:00-4:00 pm (3 hours)

Speaker



Robert Toutkoushian

Professor | University of Georgia

Grow Your Analytics Arsenal: Learn How to Use R in IR (Part 2)

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM | Location: Glen Echo

This workshop will introduce participants to R, R Studio, and useful R packages in wrangling, analyzing, and visualizing data. The workshop will demonstrate various ways participants can use R in their IR work, which participants will be able to practice throughout the session. This workshop is primarily designed for those new to R or those with limited experience, although all are welcome. The

workshop will feature instructions for setting up R and R Studio and introduce the analytic and visualization tools in R that are useful in institutional research. Participants in the workshop will have the opportunity to practice the skills introduced through actual real-time coding. Participants will be able to learn from each other and ask questions throughout the workshop. The workshop will also highlight some advanced use cases of R in IR work for those interested in continuing their journey.

Intended Audience: Anyone interested in learning R.

Equipment Needed: Laptop with R, RStudio (time in session will be devoted to downloading). Also available here: <https://posit.co/downloads/>

Presenter: Maryanne Bujacich, Georgetown University

Cost: \$270. Limited to 24 participants.

Saturday, November 8: 9:00 am - NOON; 1:00-4:00 pm (two 3-hour sessions with a break for lunch)

Networking Social

5:30 PM – 7:30 PM | Location: Hotel Bar: The Corby Kitchen

Sunday, November 09, 2025

Conference Registration & Information

8:00 AM – 5:30 PM | Location: Lower Level Registration Desk

Set for Success: Pathways for New IR Practitioners

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Glen Echo

Are you new to the field of institutional research or effectiveness?

If so, this half-day, interactive discussion-based workshop is for you! This session will bring new IR practitioners into the ongoing discussion of the core elements of our professional field including: the evolving role of institutional research; IR knowledge and skills; professional values and ethics; and finding your way within the institutional context and multiple constituencies. We will discuss the many expectations you're facing, the tools at your disposal (especially from NEAIR), and the troubles and concerns you may be experiencing as a new IR practitioner.

Presenters: Shama Akhtar, Bowie State University and Amanda Colligan, Bridgewater State University

Cost: \$135. Limited to 24 participants.

Sunday, November 9: 9:00 am-NOON (3 hrs.)

Speakers



Shama Akhtar

Director of Institutional Surveys & Analysis | Bowie State University



Amanda Colligan

Executive Director | Bridgewater State University

Telling Your Economic Impact Story with Data

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Oakley

Higher education institutions face growing pressure to demonstrate their value. This workshop empowers professionals across all sectors—and at all skill levels—to reclaim their economic story. Using internal data, participants will learn to craft accurate, mission-driven narratives that reflect their institution's economic contributions and resonate with key stakeholders. Colleges and universities of every type and size are vital economic engines. As major employers, partners to local businesses, and drivers of workforce development, they make measurable, meaningful contributions. In an era of financial constraints and public scrutiny, clearly communicating that impact is more important than ever. Co-led by two experienced practitioners, this session provides a practical, step-by-step guide for conducting an economic impact study using institutional data and public tools—without relying on external consultants or proprietary models. A real-world case study will illustrate the process, from identifying data sources to sharing results.

Intended Audience: This workshop is suitable for IR newcomers and experienced practitioners. Participants should have a basic familiarity with institutional data (such as IPEDS) and Excel (e.g., using filters and simple formulas). No prior experience with economic modeling is required.

Equipment: Laptop with MS Excel and Adobe Reader.

Presenter: John Ingram, Delaware Valley University and Cathleen Kisak, Carnegie Mellon University

Cost: \$135. Limited to 24 participants.

Sunday, November 9: 9:00 am-NOON (3-hrs.)

Speakers



John Ingram

Assistant Director of Institutional Research | Delaware Valley University



Cathleen Kisak

Institutional Research Designer and Analyst | Carnegie Mellon University

Building a Data-Informed Culture in the Age of AI

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Forest Glen

Intended for IR/IE professionals in higher education with intermediate to advanced experience, this interactive 3-hour workshop supports those leading or advising on AI integration and data-informed strategy. Participants will assess their institution's data maturity and explore how cultural readiness shapes responsible AI use. They will also develop and refine prompt strategies that ensure generative AI enhances (not replaces) expert IR judgment. Through peer dialogue, hands-on activities, and real-time feedback, attendees will leave with practical tools to align prompting, governance, and insight generation.

Intended Audience: This workshop is designed for IR/IE professionals who have a basic familiarity with generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Bard, or Copilot) and are curious about applying them thoughtfully within their institutional context. Participants should be comfortable discussing institutional research tasks (e.g., survey analysis, KPI reporting, program review) and willing to engage in collaborative reflection, hands-on prompt writing, and strategic planning. No coding or advanced AI knowledge is required.

Equipment Needed: Laptop

Presenter: Bradley Coverdale, BC Data Insights

Cost: \$135. Limited to 24 participants.
Sunday, November 9: 9:00 am-NOON (3 hrs.)

Speaker



Bradley Coverdale

Founder, Chief Data Strategist | BC Data Insights LLC

Assessment 101 for Non-Academic Units (Part 1)

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Timberlawn

This full-day interactive workshop introduces a practical, ten-step framework to help non-academic (administrative and operational) units design sustainable, outcomes-based assessment processes that align with institutional priorities. Grounded in real-world application, the session guides participants through the full assessment cycle—from writing measurable learning and operational outcomes to selecting appropriate methods, interpreting results, and developing action-oriented plans for improvement. Drawing on a proven model implemented at Binghamton University, participants will engage in guided, hands-on activities designed to foster collaboration, deepen understanding, and support immediate application to their institutional context. While the workshop focuses on foundational practices, it will also explore how simple automation and AI-supported tools can be used to streamline certain aspects of assessment planning and reporting, particularly for units with limited capacity. Ample time is dedicated to hands-on development, peer exchange, and discussion of strategies for long-term sustainability.

Intended Audience: To actively participate in this workshop, attendees should have a basic understanding of their unit's mission, goals, and services, as well as a general familiarity with institutional priorities or strategic planning documents at their campus. While no prior assessment experience is required, participants should be prepared to engage in interactive group activities such as drafting outcome statements, selecting assessment methods, and analyzing sample results. Optional segments involving AI or automation will be guided step-by-step, and no technical expertise is needed to explore those features.

Presenter: Nasrin Fatima, Binghamton University

Cost: \$270. Limited to 24 participants.
Sunday, November 9: 9:00 am-NOON; 1:00-4:00 pm (two 3-hour sessions with a break for lunch)

Speaker



Nasrin Fatima

Associate Provost for Assessment and Analytics | Binghamton University

AI and NLP: What IR and IE Practitioners Need to Know (Part 1)

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Middlebrook

In this comprehensive workshop attendees will gain a thorough understanding of how IR and IE practitioners can leverage the emerging technologies of AI and NLP. We will use hands-on experiences coupled with fun and dynamic examples to explain these fast-paced tools. Attendees will learn specific tools, mindsets, and practical prompting strategies to maximize the use of AI and NLP in higher education. Case studies, interactive Q&A sessions, and real-world examples will be shared. Come join us to not only raise your awareness of AI but also maximize these tools in your role on campus.

Equipment Required: Laptop to access free AI software.

Presenter: Jason Simon, University of North Texas

Cost: \$270. Limited to 30 participants.

Sunday, November 9: 9:00 am-NOON; 1:00 - 4:00 pm (two 3-hour sessions with a break for lunch)

Speaker



Jason Simon

Consultant, Keynote Speaker, and Co-founder | SCL Impact LLC

Communicate and Collaborate: Data in Action (Part 1)

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Linden Oak

Data does not speak for itself – it requires strong leaders to interpret and share it in ways that will get notice and action. We can be data leaders within our organization at any level, whether leading from the middle, the top, or the bottom. No matter where we are in the organization, there are two fundamental keys to success as a data leader: strong communication and effective collaboration. In this workshop, we will explore the theory behind each and engage in discussion and group exercises aimed at building confidence and competence in areas such as presentation skills, data storytelling, understanding teamwork, and how to build and run an effective team. It doesn't matter if you are an introvert or extrovert – you can become an effective leader that provides a voice for your organization's data.

Intended Audience: This workshop is focused on higher education data professionals at all levels who are practicing at a US-based institution, as the ideas and methods presented are derived from US culture and norms and may be less applicable in other environments. Because the workshop is highly participatory, attendees must be willing to engage with others in a supportive environment.

Presenter: Jeremy Goodman, Jeremy Goodman Consulting

Cost: \$270. Limited to 24 participants.

Sunday, November 9: 9:00 am-NOON; 1:00 - 4:00 pm (two 3-hour sessions with a break for lunch)

Speaker



Jeremy Goodman

Founder and Principal | Jeremy Goodman Consulting

Strategic Change Management Principles & Practices

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM | Location: Glen Echo

In higher education today, more than ever, change is the only constant. In this workshop we will look at institutional changes of all sizes and scopes, from internal departmental restructurings and operational changes to institution-wide changes that affect everyone, such as leadership, technology, and changes in the educational and political landscape. While changes come in all shapes and sizes, human reactions to change—and the influence of institutional culture on change—are strikingly similar. In this workshop, we'll examine the full cycle of change management and change leadership, as well as the activities, resources, communications, and mindsets that can support us, our colleagues, and our institutions on the journey of perpetual change in higher education.

Presenter: Rachel Groenhout, Colby College

Cost: \$135. Limited to 24 participants.

Sunday, November 9: 1:00-4:00 pm (3-hrs.)

Speaker



Rachel Groenhout

Director, Data & Change Management | Colby College

Statistics for Higher Education (Part 2)

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM | Location: Oakley

This two-part workshop will provide an overview of how statistical analysis can be used to examine problems encountered in higher education and institutional research.

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Speaker



Robert Toutkoushian

Professor | University of Georgia

Strategic AI Integration in IR/IE: Case Studies in Data Governance and Survey

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM | Location: Forest Glen

What does meaningful AI integration look like in an Office of Institutional Effectiveness? This interactive workshop equips IR/IE professionals with a hands-on framework to identify and implement AI solutions tailored to their office workflows. Using two real case studies—both built on locally hosted large language models (LLMs)—participants will explore how AI can streamline collaboration, automate high-effort tasks, and enhance data transparency. The first case features an AI-powered IR Assistant that provides conversational access to institutional data and documentation. The second case highlights a locally developed AI tool that automates survey analysis and supports curriculum planning. The session includes both knowledge sharing and guided activities. Participants will map their current workflows, assess organizational readiness, and design potential AI use cases aligned with institutional governance, access control, and strategic priorities.

Intended Audience: Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Assessment professionals from any sector. Ideal for mid- to advanced-level practitioners with an interest in automation, AI tools, or workflow transformation.

Equipment Needed: Laptop

Presenter: Xilin Zhang, New Jersey Institute of Technology and Yi Meng, New Jersey Institute of Technology

Cost: \$135. Limited to 24 participants.
Sunday, November 9: 1:00-4:00 pm (3-hrs.)

Speakers



Xilin Zhang

Associate Director of Institutional research | New Jersey Institute of Technology



Meng Yi

Associate Director for Survey Research | NJIT

Assessment 101 for Non-Academic Units (Part 2)

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Nasrin Fatima

Associate Provost for Assessment and Analytics | Binghamton University

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Jason Simon

Consultant, Keynote Speaker, and Co-founder | SCL Impact LLC

Communicate and Collaborate: Data in Action (Part 2)

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Intended Audience: This workshop is focused on higher education data professionals at all levels who are practicing at a US-based institution, as the ideas and methods presented are derived from US culture and norms and may be less applicable in other environments. Because the workshop is highly participatory, attendees must be willing to engage with others in a supportive environment.

Presenter: Jeremy Goodman, Jeremy Goodman Consulting

Cost: \$270. Limited to 24 participants.

Sunday, November 9: 9:00 am-NOON; 1:00 - 4:00 pm (two 3-hour sessions with a break for lunch)

Speaker



Jeremy Goodman

Founder and Principal | Jeremy Goodman Consulting

Disabled in NEAIR Affinity Group Kickoff

3:55 PM – 4:25 PM | Location: Oakley

Please join us for a kickoff event for the Disabled in NEAIR affinity group!

Speaker



Rae Kuprenas

Research and Assessment Analyst | Loyola University Maryland

Navigating NEAIR: A Newcomer's Toolkit

4:00 PM – 4:30 PM | Location: Glen Echo

New to NEAIR? Connect with fellow new members and get insider tips from NEAIR leadership on how to make the most of your membership and first NEAIR conference!

This sessions is FREE and is being held Sunday afternoon 4:00 - 4:30 p.m. Registration is required.

Speakers



Megan Yosko

Institutional Research Analyst II | Rice University



Kristen Procopio

Associate Director of Institutional Research & Planning | Rhode Island College

Mentor/Mentee Connect

4:30 PM – 5:00 PM | Location: Glen Echo

Speaker



Karen Vance

Adjunct Professor, Penn State IR Certificate Program | Penn State University

Queer in NEAIR Affinity Group Kickoff

4:30 PM – 5:00 PM | Location: Oakley

Please join us for the kickoff of the Queer in NEAIR Affinity Group!

Speaker



Rae Kuprenas

Research and Assessment Analyst | Loyola University Maryland

NEAIR Welcome Reception

5:00 PM – 5:30 PM | Location: Salon Foyer

Dinner, Lightening Talks & Keynote Speaker

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM | Location: Salon A-D

Making Sense of the Moment: The Human Edge in the Age of AI

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM | Location: Salon A-D

AI is a technical challenge that requires a human solution.

Or, said another way, AI isn't a story about machines; it's a story about people in contact with change.

Open a newsfeed, and you'll see new models, new tools, new advancements daily . . . hourly at times. Most of us have little need for and will never interact with these advancements. Yet, somehow, AI disruption feels existential.

We sense something about AI and our connection to and interactions with it that makes us reflect on meaning, purpose, ourselves, and what it means to be. Seen in this way, we can recognize AI disruption not so much as a technical challenge, but as a

psychological challenge—a moment, a movement even, forcing us to reconcile who we are—and who we want to be—as humans, particularly in the world of work.

Discussing recent advancements in AI, spotlighting emerging use cases in education, and speculating on how AI is poised to reshape the world of work, this talk—rather than promising certainty or a step-by-step roadmap—gives language to the inner experience of transition and how we, as humans committed to our work in education, can be both future-focused, and human-first at the same time.

Speaker



Patrick Dempsey

Loyola University Maryland, Pedagogue AI

Monday, November 10, 2025

Conference Registration & Information

7:00 AM – 5:00 PM | Location: Lower Level Registration Desk

Continental Breakfast

7:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Salon A-D

Wellness Session: Yoga

7:15 AM – 8:00 AM | Location: Great Falls

Yoga session led by Samantha Greenwood.

Speaker



Samantha Greenwood

Research Analyst | SUNY at Buffalo

SIG - Community College IR

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Glen Echo

Join IR colleagues from Community Colleges to discuss shared experiences and challenges related to reporting/analysis, accreditation, assessment, and any additional topics relevant to our sector. Get to know your colleagues in the NEAIR region working at institutions like yours.

Speakers



Claire Goverts

Specialist 2, Institutional Research | Monroe Community College



Shawn LaRoche

Associate Director of Analytics, Reporting and Research | Mount Wachusett Community College

SIG - NEAIR Mentoring Program

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Forest Glen

The Mentoring Program SIG is for attendees who want to learn more about how the NEAIR mentoring program works, what to expect as a mentor or mentee, and how to get involved. It's a great opportunity to hear experiences from past participants, ask questions, and explore how the mentoring program can support professional growth.

Speaker



Karen Vance

Adjunct Professor, Penn State IR Certificate Program | Penn State University

SIG - Culture, Climate, and Belonging Committee Interest

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Middlebrook

Interest meeting for the Culture, Climate, and Belonging committee. Join us to share your ideas about diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice in IR!

Speakers



Shama Akhtar

Director of Institutional Surveys & Analysis | Bowie State University



Rae Kuprenas

Research and Assessment Analyst | Loyola University Maryland



Emily Hsieh

Senior Data Analyst | Office of Institutional Research | Brown University

SIG - POC and Affinity Group Kickoff

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Oakley

Please join us for this informal networking opportunity designed for IR professionals of color. This session is a wonderful opportunity to meet, share experiences and challenges, and build lasting professional relationships.

Speakers



Denise Nadasen

Consultant and faculty member | Nadasen Consulting and UMGC



Karen Egypt

Assistant Director of Assessment | University of Maryland College Park

SIG - New to Detailed Financial Aid Data?

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Linden Oak

Starting with FVT/GE, and continuing with Gainful Employment for All and the proposed new IPEDS component Admissions and Consumer Transparency Supplement (ACTS), we are being asked to report more (and more detailed) financial aid information. How are you and your institution meeting this challenge?

Speakers



Jen Lesar

Senior Data Analyst | Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Jennifer Snyder

Associate Director for Institutional Research | Salve Regina University

SIG - NEAIR Fiber Circle

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Timberlawn

Start your day by networking, making, and sharing with other NEAIR crafters! All crafts, including but not limited to knitting, crochet, quilting, embroidery, and others are welcome to attend – bring your own project.

Speaker



Melissa Hartz

Executive Director, Institutional Effectiveness | University of Richmond

SIG - Newcomers to IR

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Strathmore A

This SIG provides an opportunity for newcomers to develop a support team of other newcomers to help navigate the transition into institutional research and make meaningful contributions to their institutions. Anyone new to the field of IR is welcome to attend!

Speakers



Megan Yosko

Institutional Research Analyst II | Rice University



Jennifer Wu

Chief Engineering Analytics Officer | Penn State College of Engineering

Data Puddles to Data Lakes: Assessment Integration

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM | Location: Glen Echo

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

A large public university was faced with a common challenge: a fragmented assessment landscape dominated with manual processes, and isolated data and reports. As an institution, we recognized the need to evolve in order to elevate, centralize, and integrate our accreditation, program review, and annual assessment processes. Discover how this institution navigated this transformation, from evaluating options and building stakeholder buy-in to crafting a comprehensive implementation plan as we sought a centralized digital solution that would help us to automate processes, encourage self-service among the campus community, and could be customized to meet our unique needs in order to build a stronger culture of continuous improvement and evidence-informed decision making.

Speakers



Michele Deegan

Associate VP for Academic Assessment and Accreditation | Rutgers University



Leslie Sands

Director, Client Success | HelioCampus

From Lost to Empowered: How AI Helped Me Learn My Job

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM | Location: Strathmore A

SKILLS COMPETENCIES, CAREER TRAJECTORIES, LEADERSHIP & MANAGING CHANGE

Starting a new role or learning new skills can feel overwhelming, especially in the fast-paced world of institutional research. In this session, I'll share how I used conversational AI as a learning partner to help me navigate that world. Whether I was figuring out Tableau functions, building dashboards, writing code, using Excel, or improving how I communicated findings, AI supported me in real time as I learned my job. This session is designed for beginners and the AI-curious, offering practical tips on how to use AI to build confidence, explore new tools, and learn by doing. Whether you're new to IR or simply curious about how AI can support your professional growth, this session will show how innovation can start with a simple question.

Speaker



Megan Yosko

Institutional Research Analyst II | Rice University

Survey Data Collection: Tools, Strategies and Impact

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM | Location: Oakley

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This session will share practical, proven strategies to improve the efficiency and accuracy of large-scale survey data collection for instruments such as *U.S. News & World Report*, *The Princeton Review*, *Peterson's*, the *Council of Graduate Schools & ETS Global Higher Education Survey*, the *National Community College Benchmarking Project*, *Achieving the Dream*, and *Survey of Graduate Students and Post Doctorates in Science and Engineering*.

Drawing on experiences from a large public land-grant university, a private research institution, and a community college, panelists will present tools, templates, and communication techniques that streamline survey processes across diverse campus units. Recognizing that respondents vary in their data literacy, the session will provide guidance on setting clear expectations, reinforcing the importance of data quality, and encouraging timely, well-formatted submissions.

These strategies help reduce errors, minimize follow-up, and foster smoother collaboration. Beyond data collection, panelists will discuss how institutions can repurpose survey results for longitudinal studies, internal analysis, and peer benchmarking—extending the value of the data beyond external reporting requirements.

Attendees will leave with actionable approaches to support staff, meet deadlines with less stress, and transform routine survey coordination into a more purposeful and rewarding process.

Speakers



Cathleen Kisak

Institutional Research Designer and Analyst | Carnegie Mellon University



Jennifer Wu

Chief Engineering Analytics Officer | Penn State College of Engineering



John Ingram

Assistant Director of Institutional Research | Delaware Valley University

Effective Strategies to Design an Accessible Dashboard

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM | Location: Timberlawn

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

What is an accessible dashboard for non-technical users who has various needs and backgrounds across the offices? The session will present the strategies to usable by non-technical users to design an accessible dashboard. The target audiences are IR professionals who are able to use data visualization tools such as Power BI and Tableau and want to learn accessible data visualization techniques. The strategies will help IR professionals overcome the typical obstacle of designing dashboards for non-technical users who has various needs and backgrounds: emulating vision deficiencies, providing options to visualize the formats, and providing interactive functions.

Speaker



Teruo Yokoyama
Guttman CC

Automation for Everyone: Resource-Conscious Strategies

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM | Location: Forest Glen

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

Automation doesn't have to mean using fancy tools, inaccessible by budget or skillset or staffing, automation can meet you where you are and help you efficiently perform meaningful work using skills and tools already available or easily gained. Our session provides a cross-institutional and practical approach to automation (including how to define it) and workflow that levels the playing field for IR/IE offices with limited resources. We bring unique perspectives as (one current and one former) athletic coaches to address innovation in the face of budget and staffing issues. We will share our different contexts and provide multiple case studies where we define common problems faced by IR/IE departments and walk through solutions. We conclude with a discussion on the philosophy of automation wherein the mindset of automation is more important than the tool to promote an atmosphere of ingenuity within your own teams.

Speakers



Robert Cilino
Head Coach, Alpine Skiing | Alfred University



Mike Nguyen
Harvard University

Leveraging AI & Automation to Mobilize Self-Serve Data

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM | Location: Linden Oak

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

As demands for timely, accessible data continue to rise IR professionals must evolve from data gatekeepers to data enablers. This session explores how combining a strong self-serve data platform with AI and automation can transform how campuses access and act on data. We'll outline the essential components of an effective self-service ecosystem, from integrated data sources to role-based access and interactive dashboards. Building on that foundation, we'll demonstrate how generative AI allows users to interact with data through chat-based interfaces, locate the data that they need, and receive narrative explanations-removing barriers for non-technical users. Automation further extends impact through scheduled distributions, embedded data in templates (e.g., for program review), and pre-built cohorts for tracking. By leveraging AI and automation to mobilize data in a self-serve platform, IR teams can reduce manual workload and drive more informed, equitable decision-making.

Speakers



Eric Spear
President | Precision Campus



Wyntre Stout
Customer Insights Analyst | Precision Campus

Campus Climate & Belonging: A Process Rooted in Equity

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM | Location: Middlebrook

CULTURE, CLIMATE, & BELONGING: EMPOWERING STUDENT SUCCESS

Student belonging is a critical factor in academic success and overall well-being on college campuses. However, belonging is complex and deeply shaped by individual identities and experiences. Recognizing this, our institution intentionally selected, implemented, and analyzed a campus-wide climate survey through an equity lens to better understand barriers to inclusion. In this session, we will share our intentional approach to survey design focusing on gathering demographic information not stored in our census, key lessons learned, and how we analyzed statistically significant difference in student groups along with data visualization tools to identify equity gaps. We will highlight how these insights inform actionable strategies for fostering institutional change and promoting a more inclusive campus environment. Attendees will gain practical takeaways on survey methodology, equity-driven analysis, and data-informed decision-making that can be applied to their own campuses.

Speakers



Lauren Haugh
Senior Research Analyst | Bridgewater State University



Amanda Colligan
Executive Director | Bridgewater State University

Search Party: Maximize Website Discoverability

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM | Location: Strathmore B

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

How can an institution maximize webpage views? As webpages are continuously published, competition to appear on the first page of search results increases. Even highly relevant pages can go unseen if they are unoptimized, making visibility just as important as creating the content itself.

At the University at Buffalo, we discovered that when users searched for university data on enrollment, faculty and staff numbers, and other key metrics, the Institutional Analysis website was not in the list of results. This session shares how we identified underperforming key IR webpages in Google Search and applied data-driven strategies to address these challenges. Participants will learn actionable methods to measure their own webpage rankings in Google and take away clear strategies for improving visibility through search engine optimization, boosting engagement with their content.

Speaker



Nicholas Tomaras

Assistant for Institutional Research | University at Buffalo

Exhibitors

9:45 AM – 10:15 AM | Location: Salon Foyer

ChatGPT and the Real Girl

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM | Location: Forest Glen

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This presentation aims to tell a story, a story about a real girl (an IR data analyst) whose areas of expertise lay in statistical analysis and survey implementation but who was asked to be part of a large-scale, high-stakes data project with an extremely tight deadline at her institution. This project entailed using Oracle SQL (which the girl had never used before) to get data out of a software program in such a way that the data pulls could be automated going forward and used for years to come. Where to turn? ChatGPT, of course. This presentation will cover how this analyst used ChatGPT to simultaneously code for the project and also learn SQL programming, in addition to troubleshooting a tricky Tableau visualization. It will suggest ways to use AI as a self-teaching tool, rather than just as a crutch to get the work done.

Speaker



Samantha Greenwood

Research Analyst | SUNY at Buffalo

5 Things to Know Before Your Self-Study Visit

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM | Location: Glen Echo

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

What do peer review team members wish institutions knew before the visit? Drawing on years of experience as peer evaluators and institutional leads, the presenters will share five key tips that can make your self-study process, on-site visit, and follow-up more effective and less stressful. With a focus on preparation, communication, evidence, and leadership, this session offers practical advice and candid insights from both sides of the review process.

Speakers



Carlee Ranalli

Dean, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness | Hagerstown Community College



Karen Egypt

Assistant Director of Assessment | University of Maryland College Park

Doctoral Pathways: Insights from a Dashboard Tool

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM | Location: Strathmore B

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

Monitoring doctoral student success is essential to institutional effectiveness. This session introduces a Path Analysis Dashboard designed to visualize doctoral student progression from entry to completion or attrition. Attendees will explore how this tool can be used to analyze key metrics-such as time-to-degree, retention, and graduation rates-across cohorts and demographics. The session will highlight practical strategies for integrating dashboard insights into institutional research workflows to inform data-driven decision-making and student support initiatives. Attendees will leave with actionable approaches to improve doctoral outcomes at their institutions.

Speaker



Nasrin Fatima

Associate Provost for Assessment and Analytics | Binghamton University

Techniques to Communicate Data Limitations and Nuance

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM | Location: Middlebrook

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

Institutional researchers have a professional and ethical responsibility to effectively communicate project results and methodological

limitations. For example, you may need to explain to audiences how a statistical analysis may not generalize to certain groups or potential shortcomings with your data or a predictive model. This presentation will explore techniques for communicating limitations and nuances of data and research which are applicable to various research and evaluation projects. The presentation will discuss common methodological limitations we face as institutional researchers and ways data may be misinterpreted or misconstrued by audiences. Using real world examples, we will discuss different approaches and strategies to convey data constraints while maintaining clarity and impact.

Speakers



Alexandra Beauchamp

Associate Director, Office of Assessment and Research | College of the Holy Cross



Matt Wilkinson

Senior Institutional Research Analyst | Bentley University

Creating an Automated Data Pipeline with Python

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM | Location: Oakley

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

In conjunction with our external partner Datatelligent, we used python to extract data from IPEDS website. Then, we stored the data in Snowflake. Using Snowflake, we were able to clean and transform the data in order to disseminate the data through PowerBI. Using PowerBI, we create easy to use data visualization for key stakeholders at the University. This process replaced the time consuming and manual methods to extract IPEDS data previously and automates the process so when IPEDS updates, the data is refreshed within minutes. Finally, this process can be used for many third party data sources and connect the pipeline to other data warehouses. This proposal has great value to improve the efficiency of collecting, extracting, storing, and transforming data for IR offices.

Speakers



Robert Jones

Director of Strategic Planning and Research; | Bryant University



Yuchen Wang

Institutional Data and Research Analyst | Bryant University



James Brown

Assistant Director Institutional Research | Bryant University



Lucinda Nord

Director of Customer Success | Datatelligent

Unlocking AI Potential-The Power of Data Management

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM | Location: Linden Oak

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

Ready to lead your institution into the future of AI-powered innovation? Join this session to discover how robust data governance and campus-wide data literacy are the keys to unlocking transformative potential in higher education. Designed for institutional researchers, data analysts, academic leaders, and IT professionals, this session explores proven methods for building effective data governance structures and fostering a culture where data is accurate, accessible, and actionable. Learn how to engage stakeholders, define clear roles in data stewardship, and implement practical tools that break down silos and drive collaboration. Through real-world examples and actionable strategies, you'll see how institutions are empowering their teams to make informed decisions and maximize the value of their data assets. Walk away with the confidence and insights needed to champion data literacy initiatives and position your institution at the forefront of educational innovation.

Speaker



Zinan Chowdhury

Senior Manager | Deloitte Consulting

Conforming Survey Questions for Longitudinal Analysis

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM | Location: Strathmore A

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

The language of survey questions at institutions may change year to year, even if the motivation behind the questions remains the same. These subtle changes over time can make longitudinal analysis of responses challenging when reporting tools such as Tableau interpret small changes in wording or punctuation as entirely new and different questions. As a solution, we present a custom-built Python- and Excel-based tool for conforming questions across survey instances into a single Conformed Question Library. By developing this tool, we have been able to build a library of conformed survey questions dating back to 2017, allowing for clean, accessible, and intuitive longitudinal analysis which captures how survey questions and responses have evolved over time. In just one year of using this method, we have conformed 10 surveys spanning 9 years, and totaling 2,683 individual survey questions standardized into just 805 unique conformed questions.

Speaker



Sarah Grobe

Data Analyst | Bowdoin College

Leverage Instant Access to Thousands of U.S. News Metrics & Historical Data

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM | Location: Timberlawn

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

Save time on data collection and management by powering your dashboards and reports through Academic Insights. Elevate the conversation with your leadership by providing the detailed and historical context behind institutional movement. Keep up with data and ranking updates in real time and ensure accurate data across institutions. Stop by to see our team demonstrate why college and university administrators use Academic Insights for benchmarking and institutional data reporting across internal programs and peer schools, and how they align their institution's goals and priorities with data driven insights and decisions.

Speaker



Chloe Farmer

Account Executive | U.S. News & World Report - Academic Insights

From Static to Dynamic NSSE: Dashboard Development

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Timberlawn

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is both a boon and a bear. Although it contains a wealth of insights - the very nature and complexity of the NSSE and its results make it overwhelming to analyze, interpret, and get campus audiences to view and use. In the past, Loyola has shared static results with limited access, giving presentations and sharing the NSSE-provided snapshot report with select audiences. However, for Loyola's most recent NSSE administration, Loyola's leadership explicitly requested alignment of both the survey instrument and results to Loyola's undergraduate student learning outcomes, accreditation standards, and new strategic plan. This session will share how we achieved this vision, including the development and implementation of a dynamic NSSE dashboard tool; strategies for engaging campus audiences with the results; and plans for expanding dashboard offerings in alignment with Loyola's 2025-30 strategic plan.

Speakers



Sarah Winger

Research and Assessment Analyst | Loyola University Maryland



Han Nguyen

Research & Assessment Analyst | Loyola University Maryland



Marcia Preston

Assistant Director of Institutional Research | Loyola University Maryland

Online Learning in Focus: Course Analyses & Retention Factors

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Oakley

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This session features two presentations that explore the predictors of student success in online learning contexts. George Washington University conducted a study on retention in fully online programs to identify characteristics most strongly associated with retention. Age and gender emerged as the most significant factors, with older students and men showing higher drop rates. A smaller but significant effect was also observed for race/ethnicity. Follow-up projects, including a student survey and revised advising efforts, will be discussed. George Mason University analyzed large-enrollment courses with high D, F, and/or withdrawal (DFW) rates to assess whether modality was linked to student outcomes. Online modality was associated with higher DFW rates in general and advanced composition courses, but not in quantitatively focused courses. The study also examined other predictors of DFWs. Results from this work have informed advising, curriculum planning, and instructional design recommendations.

Speakers



John Dooris

Director of Research and Analysis | George Mason University



Jennifer Pattershall-Geide

Senior Data Analyst | George Washington University



Jane Hyatt Thorpe

George Washington University



Heather Renault

George Washington University



George Gray

George Washington University



Kreda Boci

George Washington University

Code with Confidence (Scores) Using AI

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Forest Glen

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This session explores how AI tools can be used to code open-ended survey responses while providing confidence scores that indicate how likely the coding is to be accurate. At a large public research university, a weekly pulse survey reaches thousands of students and generates hundreds of free-text comments each week. While the data are rich, manual coding is too time-consuming to be practical. To solve this, the institution piloted the use of multiple large language models to code responses. By aggregating outputs from different models and prompts, confidence scores are assigned to each code, giving analysts a way to trust and use the data without needing to review every comment manually. This approach supports faster, scalable analysis while maintaining transparency about the reliability of results. Attendees will learn how this method works and how it can be adapted to other contexts.

Speakers



Braden Hosch

Vice President for Educational and Institutional Effectiveness | Stony Brook University



Robert Miller

Director of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness | Stony Brook University



Ahmed Belazi

Executive Director of Strategic Analytics and Technologies, Division of Student Affairs | Stony Brook University

Leading with Data: Equity-Minded Enrollment Management

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Strathmore A

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

In an increasingly challenging time for higher education, data provide an opportunity to spotlight inequities and illustrate strategies to close gaps. Using Estela Bensimon's framework of equity-mindedness, practitioners begin with data and engage in inquiry that reflects on the barriers, policies, and practices at our institutions that perpetuate equity gaps. Institutional Research can build partnerships that increase data literacy across campus and better support students. This past year, our enrollment management team found patterns in admissions yield, enrollment, retention, and student success. We applied this model to our Hispanic and Latine students, prompting changes in policy and outreach, increased programming, and substantial redesigns in internal engagement for such initiatives. This session will review the equity-minded framework used, highlight key strategies we used to engage across the campus community, the changes seen as a result, and suggestions on how you might engage in this work on your campus.

Speaker



Amanda Colligan

Executive Director | Bridgewater State University

Power Your Path: Mentors, Sponsors, and Advisors

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Middlebrook

SKILLS COMPETENCIES, CAREER TRAJECTORIES, LEADERSHIP & MANAGING CHANGE

Who's in your professional support network? In institutional research where career paths are often nonlinear and evolving, success isn't just about skill, but also about the people who guide and advocate for you. This session explores how to identify, build, and sustain a diverse network of support that includes mentors, sponsors, coaches, and advisors. Each role offers unique value, from skill-building and accountability to visibility and advancement. You'll learn how to intentionally cultivate relationships across levels of experience and roles, creating a dynamic network of supportive professionals. Whether you're early in your career or a seasoned leader, this session will provide strategies to strengthen your professional ecosystem and support others in theirs. Come prepared to reflect, connect, and leave with practical ideas and tools to expand the web of support that powers your growth and resilience in the field of IR/IE.

Speaker



Karen Vance

Adjunct Professor, Penn State IR Certificate Program | Penn State University

From Weeks to Minutes: Accelerating Qualitative Data Analysis with MLY to Drive Campus Impact

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Linden Oak

CULTURE, CLIMATE, & BELONGING: EMPOWERING STUDENT SUCCESS

In this presentation, participants will see how Heriot-Watt University has transformed qualitative feedback analysis using Explorance MLY, an AI-powered solution. What once took weeks to analyze in staff and student surveys can now be completed in minutes, providing timely insights that support evidence-based decision-making across their global campuses.

Speaker



Kirsty Scanlan

Director of Strategic Planning and Performance, Heriot-Watt University | Heriot-Watt University

Retention Analysis within College, STEM and University

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Glen Echo

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

Student retention is a critical indicator of institutional performance and student success. At Penn State University's College of Engineering, the IR office analyzed undergraduate retention at three levels: College-wide, within STEM majors, and university-wide. Across these levels, the study examined factors such as gender, first-generation status, SAT scores, math placement, first-term ABC rates, etc. Results reveal that retention patterns and impacting factors vary by level, highlighting the importance of context for stakeholders. To support ongoing analysis and improve data access, a Power BI retention dashboard with over 70 metrics was developed. The presenters will demonstrate this dashboard and share how such analyses inform the College's operations and programming. While focused on engineering cohorts, the methodology and insights are broadly applicable across institutional research, particularly in advancing student success initiatives.

Speakers



Jennifer Wu

Chief Engineering Analytics Officer | Penn State College of Engineering



Chenying Wang

Analysis and Planning Consultant | Penn State College of Engineering

LUNCH - Business Meeting and Poster Lightening Talks

12:00 PM – 1:45 PM | Location: Salon A-D

Beyond Basic Retention: Machine Learning with NSC Data

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM | Location: Strathmore A

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This presentation demonstrates how IR/IE offices can use widely available National Student Clearinghouse StudentTracker data to move beyond basic retention reporting and tackle the strategic question many university leaders want answered: 'Are our students more likely to persist and graduate here than at competing institutions?' Through conceptual overviews and R demonstrations, attendees will learn to create datasets and machine learning algorithms that statistically control for student differences, enabling fair institutional comparisons. The presentation walks through the complete analytical pipeline: data cleaning and merging, machine learning model development, and results interpretation. Real-world case studies help inform pressing questions: What are realistic retention expectations given institutional student profiles? How much improvement can targeted interventions realistically achieve for underserved populations? Participants will leave with practical R code and frameworks to implement these tools at their institutions. Complete R code provided to all attendees.

Speaker



Steven Sherrin

Wentworth Institute of Technology

Redesigning Surveys to Support Student Success

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM | Location: Strathmore B

CULTURE, CLIMATE, & BELONGING: EMPOWERING STUDENT SUCCESS

Amid rising demands for meaningful data to better understand the student experience and inform student success initiatives, our office redesigned three critical surveys: an undergraduate entering student survey and two university-wide graduate/professional student surveys (admissions and exit). Our office previously designed surveys for university clients on a by-request basis which led to misaligned instruments and gaps in understanding the holistic student experience -- particularly at entry and exit points. Now, operating within a new survey strategy, our redesigned surveys address these issues by consolidating instruments, integrating stakeholder input, standardizing questions across surveys, and embedding flexibility to meet varied school needs. This session will explore our process of survey realignment, lessons learned, and future improvements. We will share how these efforts are impacting our data and analytics work, including the use of improved data processes, dashboard reporting, and the integration of survey data into a student lifecycle project.

Speakers



Rebecca Hatch

Associate Director, Office of Institutional Research | Tufts University



Kimberly Livingstone

Research Analyst | Tufts University

K-Medians Clustering to Determine Peer Institutions

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM | Location: Timberlawn

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This presentation will explore how our office conducted k-medians cluster analysis using publicly reported institutional data to form lists of peers and aspirants for our institution. We will cover the process from data pre-processing and cleansing, to comparing two different R packages used to conduct the cluster analyses themselves, to the formation of our peer and aspirant institution lists along with associated reports and outputs. Prior to the formation of these new peer and aspirant institutions lists, our institution's most recent peer and aspirant institution lists were created over 20 years ago, so this presentation will be particularly useful for other institution's institutional researchers who are interested in either updating dated lists or creating new lists of peer and aspirant institutions for their own institution.

Speakers



Peter Massarone Jr

Institutional Research Analyst | University of Rhode Island



Ananya Pujary

Data Analyst I | University of Rhode Island

Applying ML to Survey Data for Student Retention

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM | Location: Forest Glen

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This session demonstrates how machine learning techniques can be applied to multiple student surveys—including SERU, NSSE, and a homegrown first-year survey—combined with institutional records to study retention. Methods such as Principal Component Analysis (PCA), feature selection, and predictive modeling with the Fast Library for Automated Machine Learning (FLAML), CatBoost classifier, and LightGBM are used to identify key factors and predict persistence. We will review the pros and cons of each technique, share results, and provide adaptable Python code so participants can apply similar analyses at their own institutions.

Speakers



Chengbo Yin

Director of Institutional Effectiveness | Rutgers University Newark



Ziwei Zhang

Research Assistant | Rutgers University Newark

Software Utilization for Accreditation Preparedness

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM | Location: Glen Echo

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

Accreditation success is about having the right strategy, process, and tools from the start. This session walks through an institution-wide approach to accreditation readiness using Watermark's Planning & Self-Study (P&SS). From evidence management, general education assessment, annual program assessment building to formal program reviews and to strategic objective tracking, see how a community college optimizes P&SS to stay ahead of accreditation demands. Attendees will hear best practices, lessons learned, and join an interactive discussion on maximizing P&SS for continuous improvement.

Speaker



Kelli Sisler

Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness & ALO | Garrett College

Inclusive Data Culture: The Answer's in the Room

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM | Location: Linden Oak

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

While none of us claim to have ALL of the data, ALL of the answers, or ALL of the expertise, at our institutions—collectively—we have the knowledge, skills, and vision to carry out effective and transformative data work. In this session, we will share how we are fostering transparency and collaboration in our data culture to enhance data products, data stakeholders' experiences, and the overarching data strategy of the institution. We will share our institution's journey of building a data governance structure and data stewardship practices that rely heavily on inclusivity. Using examples from data literacy training, report writing standards, and comprehensive data documentation, the presenters will share the pathways they have created for data stakeholders to be included in the right ways at the right moments to ensure that the answer is, indeed, in the room.

Speakers



Rachel Groenhout

Director, Data & Change Management | Colby College



Christopher Hourigan

Director of Institutional Research & Analytics | Colby College

What to Expect When You're Expecting: A Cloud Migration

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM | Location: Middlebrook

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

As more colleges and universities transition away from legacy on-premise systems, cloud-based platforms are becoming a strategic institutional priority. This session does not offer a prescriptive roadmap or a list of “don'ts.” Instead, it acknowledges the complexity and variability of cloud migration—shaped by institutional type, data architecture, IT support, and budget constraints. Participants will explore how existing data structures may limit progress and will be encouraged to adopt a strategic mindset by letting go of the wrong questions and discovering the right ones (to guide their migration journey).

Speakers



Lester Ko

Director of Institutional Research | Trinity College



Paige Kinney

Senior Data Analyst | Trinity College

Leveraging Data: Use Case for Strategic Decision Making

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM | Location: Oakley

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This session will provide an overview of the comprehensive and powerful data tools offered by Academic Analytics and real-world examples in strategic planning and faculty development and evaluation. Panelists will include representatives from Academic Analytics and a data analyst from Villanova University.

Speakers



Alexander Tompkins

Account Manager | Academic Analytics



Stephen Sheridan

Senior Director for Institutional Effectiveness | Villanova University



Kenneth Tsang

Senior Research Analyst, Institutional Effectiveness | Villanova University

Are Your Students Receiving the Help They Need?

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Salon Foyer

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

Three metrics at our institution that are associated with first term GPA and retention to year 2 are discussed in relation to tutoring utilization. Those metrics are the course login totals, the number of courses a student is enrolled in that have high numbers of D, F, and W grades, and an at-risk indicator on our mid-term progress report. Professors are sent a survey asking whether each student is at risk of a low grade in their course. Not surprisingly, it is an extremely strong predictor, and not difficult to administer. The other issue covered is the use of campus tutoring services. Clearly, a first-line intervention is for students to get tutoring help in their courses. A low percentage of students enrolled in the courses with lower grades or named as "at risk" on their professors' progress report surveys are making use of free campus tutoring services.

Speaker



Nora Galambos

Senior Data Scientist | Stony Brook University

Ongoing Assessment of a STEM Living-Learning Community

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Salon Foyer

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

Living-learning communities (LLCs) present a unique opportunity for Residential Life to partner with academic departments to provide students with deeper intellectual and social engagement around their interest areas. How do we provide evidence that these collaborations are producing their intended outcomes? Based on longitudinal analysis of achieved major and GPA, this presentation describes a case study of BIOME House, a community of first-year university students who intend to major in Biology. We will review data from over a decade of BIOME House residents and compare their achievements with other students who did not participate in this LLC to better understand the potential outcomes from LLC membership.

Speaker



Anna Raup-Kounovsky

Data Analyst | The Pennsylvania State University

Using Data Literacy to Drive Campus Collaboration

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Salon Foyer

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

Data literacy empowers people to communicate outcomes and make strategic decisions for programs, a growing need on college campuses. Who is responsible for data literacy, however, is unclear and often defuse. Institutional Research offices often take on data literacy responsibilities and partner with allies and other collaborative areas on campus. This poster provides a road map to build coalition across campus. We share from two different institutional types and invite you to actively engage with our poster to add your own experiences to find allies on campus for starting a data literacy program.

Speakers



Katherine O'Brien

Research Analyst | Hofstra University



Daniel Sisco

Asst. Director | Loyola University

Optimizing an SIS Transition: Lessons Learned

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Salon Foyer

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

Implementation of a new student information system introduces a unique opportunity to improve policies and procedures and collaborate with stakeholders across the college. Through the recent implementation of the SIS Jenzabar, our office has worked to ensure not only that the data needs of the college continue to be met, but processes are continually improved. Now that we have left the nest and "gone live," we have identified gaps which we address through our continued cross-departmental meetings. The poster will display types of data projects undertaken in the new SIS, collaborations with stakeholders, and best practices developed from the reflective process of a new implementation. This will include automations built in the new system through the J1 Workflow and Communications modules which have reduced manual processes, the use of AI through Jenzabar's Chatbot feature, and dashboards/reports built to proactively ensure data quality.

Speaker



Amelia McCarthy

Director of Institutional Research & Data Governance | Maria College

Analyzing Service Hours Among Faculty Members

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Salon Foyer

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

We will describe the development of our institution's first Faculty Service Survey, a tool designed to increase the visibility and understanding of service contributions and to assess workload disparities. We focus on how the survey was designed and distributed to collect data regarding faculty members' service commitments across different service categories. We explain how the raw survey data was cleaned, analyzed, and shared with the faculty in the form of summary reports and dashboards. Lastly, we share lessons learned from this first iteration of the survey and outline our next steps.

Speaker



Gavin Woodard

Institutional Research Analyst | Lehigh University

Leveraging Student Groups to Enrich Survey Insights

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Salon Foyer

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

While student survey data can highlight a college's strengths and challenges, it often doesn't reveal the 'why' behind the numbers. To bridge this gap, our IR Office partnered with Student Life and connected with existing student groups (e.g. Peer Leaders, Student Government Association, etc.) to better understand students' lived experiences and challenges on campus. We facilitated discussions during student groups' regular meetings using semi-structured discussion guides focused on key survey data points. This approach enabled us to gather meaningful insights that helped us interpret survey results more effectively. Students shared perspectives on key survey topics such as peer connection and academic preparedness. These insights provided actionable information to strengthen the college's efforts to promote student success and belonging.

Speaker



Nyssa Hasan

Guttman Community College

The High School Years: Implications on College Success

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM | Location: Salon Foyer

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

This poster presents findings from a large higher education institution on how curriculum and pre-college preparation influence student success in college and beyond. Using statistical analysis, the Office of Institutional Analysis at the University of Buffalo explored the effects of student choices in high school and the insights this offers to institutional administrators, policy makers, and analysts. The intended audience of this poster is any policy maker, administrator, or IR analyst who might be interested in applying the same replicable analysis to their own population.

Speaker



Jordan Knutsen

University at Buffalo

From Silos to Synergy: A Data Governance Journey

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM | Location: Strathmore B

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

This session demonstrates the journey of how a public university system office engaged stakeholders and executive leaders to build a data strategy and a data governance model to improve the effective use of data. A consultant was brought in to assess the existing data culture, to identify strengths and opportunities, to create a community of practice to kick off the data strategy, and to create a year-one roadmap. Data governance was introduced to stakeholders. Through a collective effort, a structure was designed, members of the data governance committee were selected, and a charge was created. The data governance committee identified roles and responsibilities and set priorities.

Speakers



Denise Nadasen

Consultant and faculty member | Nadasen Consulting and UMGC



Ekaterina Sule

Director of Decision Support and IR | University System of Maryland



Marcus Harrington

Deputy CIO, Enterprise Technology and Development | University System of Maryland

The Dash Is in the Details

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM | Location: Timberlawn

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

Dashboards are powerful tools for communicating data, but their effectiveness depends on more than just visual appeal. This discussion forum invites participants to share and explore best practices for dashboard design in higher education, focusing on principles that transcend specific tools or platforms. Together, we'll examine how to create dashboards that are clear, purposeful, and user-centered—whether for senior leadership, student services, or the public. The session will open with a brief overview of foundational design concepts such as audience alignment, and visual hierarchy. The majority of the time will be devoted to open dialogue, where attendees can share experiences, ask questions, and offer insights into what has (and hasn't) worked at their institutions.

Speakers



Laura Walker (She/Her)

Senior Analyst for Decision Support & Visual Analytics | Bowie State University



Shama Akhtar

Director of Institutional Surveys & Analysis | Bowie State University

AI for Qualitative Analysis: Friend or Foe?

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM | Location: Forest Glen

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

IR/IE offices are increasingly exploring how generative AI can reduce the time required for traditionally labor-intensive qualitative analysis. This session shares how one office used ChatGPT to analyze multiple student focus group transcripts. While previous AI use had been limited to quantitative contexts, this project marked the office's first structured attempt to apply generative AI to qualitative data. The session outlines a dual-track approach—one top-down and one bottom-up—to explore how different prompting strategies influenced outcomes. Attendees will learn how AI was used to identify themes and extract quotes, where human intervention was essential for quality assurance and direction, and what tradeoffs emerged between efficiency and oversight. The session offers a practical framework for others interested in testing generative AI in their own qualitative workflows.

Speaker



Malek Kaloti

Strategic Analytics Fellow | Harvard University

Influences & Politics: College Choice in Modern Times

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM | Location: Middlebrook

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

What about higher education is important to the modern college student, especially in an often politically-charged, influenced landscape? In this presentation, the speakers from two large higher education institutions will share their findings on the driving forces behind college choice and consumerism. Using both qualitative and quantitative data, these institutions will reveal new information about today's college students through the lens of political ideology, as well as personal and societal influences. Research methodology and practical application will be shared to ensure this session is applicable to those in IR and other high education positions.

Speakers



Kristy Hove

Director of Enrollment Management & Campus Strategy | Penn State Lehigh Valley



Holly Klick

SUNY University at Buffalo



Carolyn Kidder-Owczarczak

Assistant Director of Enrollment Analytics & Data | SUNY University at Buffalo

Data to Impact: STEM Success at a Liberal Arts College

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM | Location: Glen Echo

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

This presentation details research outcomes from an HHMI Inclusive Excellence grant at a liberal arts college. We initially analyzed institutional data, including grades and DFW rates in key gateway STEM courses, and performed logistic regression to identify factors impacting STEM degree attainment, informing faculty of critical performance gaps. We then tracked progress using a multi-faceted approach: ongoing quantitative analysis, student surveys and focus groups, qualitative interviews with faculty and administrators, and benchmarking against national data (NCES BPS). This presentation will share key findings, diverse research methods, and address challenges encountered while striving for inclusive excellence in STEM.

Speaker



Tom McGuinness

Director of Institutional Research, Analysis, and Planning | Bates College

New Strategies for Course Scheduling: A Collaboration

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM | Location: Strathmore A

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This session presents a case study on how Essex County College utilized data from its Banner ERP system and student preference surveys to develop a more effective course scheduling method. The data were combined to project the number of sections needed in the upcoming semester for each course, as well as the optimal day, time, and modality to offer them. The presentation will cover how specific majors' enrollment trends, such as persistence rate and course pass rate, were integrated into the projections. The overall project supports the Academic Master Plan's goals and objectives. The presentation includes a testimony from a member of Academic Affairs on the new Online Associate Degree in Arts option that was developed in response to this data. Emphasis will be made on how the Institutional Research Office is partnering with Academic Affairs with this project, to improve retention, average credit loads, and student satisfaction.

Speakers



Noushig Ohanian

Associate Director of institutional Research | Essex County College



Alexa Kirkpatrick

Research Coordinator | Essex County College



William Tooma

Dean of Faculty & Academics | Essex County College

Building Community on Campus as IR/IE Professionals

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM | Location: Linden Oak

SKILLS COMPETENCIES, CAREER TRAJECTORIES, LEADERSHIP & MANAGING CHANGE

With the current uncertainty about the future of education in this country, finding the time for community connection and self-care is particularly important to being effective IR/IE professionals and healthy, happy people. We argue that as IR/IE professionals, getting to interact with campus users beyond formal data request channels offers us the context to ask better questions, develops the trust needed for effective professional relationships, and allows us to discover and practice what restores us to prevent burnout. This presentation will spend time exploring the "why" and "how" of creating connections on and off campus as IR/IE professionals and will provide moments of collaboration among those attending the presentation. Walk away from the session with ideas to build more connections at your organization.

Speakers



Claire Goverts

Specialist 2, Institutional Research | Monroe Community College



Katrina Sliter

Specialist, Institutional Research | Monroe CC

IPEDS 2025-26: Updates, Deadlines, and Training

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM | Location: Salon A-D

SKILLS COMPETENCIES, CAREER TRAJECTORIES, LEADERSHIP & MANAGING CHANGE

Stay up to date with the latest IPEDS changes, deadlines, and training opportunities. This session will cover recent updates to IPEDS data collection and reporting requirements, highlight key deadlines for the current cycle, and provide an overview of available workshops and resources to support both new and experienced institutional researchers. Attendees will leave with practical information and guidance to navigate the current reporting landscape with confidence.

Speakers



John Ingram

Assistant Director of Institutional Research | Delaware Valley University



Jennifer Dunseath

Independent Consultant, Institutional Research and NECHE Accreditation | Self-employed

U.S. News & World Report: Annual Update

4:00 PM – 4:45 PM | Location: Salon A-D

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

Each year, institutional researchers face the challenge of explaining complex rankings data to nontechnical audiences. This session, led by U.S. News, is designed to help. We'll cover the just-released 2026 Best Colleges Rankings, upcoming changes under consideration for future methodologies, and key milestones for the Colleges, Grad Schools and Online Programs editions. We'll also highlight resources available to school contacts ahead of each publication. The session will wrap up with a Q&A to address your questions.

Speakers



Eric Brooks

Director, Education Data Analysis | US News & World Report



Sam Wellington

Data Analyst | U.S. News & World Report

Efficient IPEDS Reporting Using R

4:00 PM – 4:45 PM | Location: Middlebrook

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

IPEDS reporting is a mandatory, recurring responsibility for IR offices in most universities. While the requirements of each survey are relatively straightforward, manually inputting data is laborious and prone to human error. In this session, the presenters will begin by sharing an alternative to data entry: the IPEDSuploadables R package, which outputs text files for direct upload into the IPEDS data collection system. The presenters will walk through the steps of using the package, including formatting institutional data for processing, producing an uploadable report from the formatted data. Following this, the presenters will share a way to validate what was uploaded before submitting to IPEDS. Code templates and online resources will also be shared, facilitating attendees' application of this approach in their own professional contexts. By streamlining the traditionally manual process of IPEDS reporting, IR professionals can save time, avoid potential errors, and reallocate their efforts towards other institutional priorities.

Speakers



Emily Orr

Assistant Director, Institutional Research | University of Rhode Island



Alexander Nanni

Director of Institutional Research and Analytics | Roger Williams University

Overcoming Analysis Paralysis: From Data to Decisions

4:00 PM – 4:45 PM | Location: Strathmore B

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

How can you help stakeholders shift from analysis paralysis to progress? How can you help stakeholders shift from requesting data to using data? Learn practical and engaging strategies to strengthen stakeholders' usage of data for actionable next steps. The strategies include effective ways to present data, guide discussions, and support decisions. These strategies offer a flexible framework for improving reliance on information from dashboards, survey findings, and other institutional research analyses for planning and decisions. The strategies are easily adaptable for facilitating meetings, making presentations, or hosting workshops. The strategies are important for increasing data use to advance strategic plan goals, improve outcomes, and compile accreditation evidence.

Speakers



Elisa Hertz

CUNY Guttman Community College



Nyssa Hasan

Guttman Community College



Teruo Yokoyama

Guttman CC

Transformative Experiences' Impact on Student Success

4:00 PM – 4:45 PM | Location: Strathmore A

CULTURE, CLIMATE, & BELONGING: EMPOWERING STUDENT SUCCESS

Student success is important to many institutions, whether that is defined as academic achievement, income, or retention/completion. While there are various demographic variables and intervening variables known to affect student success, this presentation specifically investigates the effects of transformational experiences. [University] defines transformational experiences as those "that fundamentally challenge a person's assumptions and preconceptions." [University] has a rich dataset of survey questions about these experiences, encompassing over ten years of surveys and containing quantitative and qualitative data. Experiences commonly cited include studying abroad, courses, and personal growth through interpersonal relationships. This presentation will demonstrate how an institutional research office used regression analysis with survey data to examine how undergraduate transformational experiences relate to measures of student success. Additionally, the presentation will discuss how this office is working to align new, more complex analyses with university strategic goals, positioning the office as a key resource to support institutional priorities.

Speaker



Kathleen McGreal

Senior Research Analyst | Tufts University

Using AI to Improve Data Accessibility and Predictions

4:00 PM – 4:45 PM | Location: Forest Glen

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

At any organization, we know that getting timely answers from institutional data can be challenging, especially when those answers are buried in reports or require technical skills to retrieve. That's why we've started developing a set of AI-powered tools to make it easier for faculty, staff, and administrators to get the information they need, when they need it. This conversational AI tool that allows users to ask everyday questions like "How many students are enrolled in a particular Program this term?" or "Which majors are growing the fastest?" and receive real-time answers without needing to write a single line of code or run a complex report. The goal is to put data directly into the hands of the people who use it for advising, planning, and making decisions and in the same time which can be used to fill in survey data required for Institutional Research.

Speakers



Samyukta Alapati

Director, Office of Institutional Research and Analytics | Rowan University



Vijayakumar Bharathwaj

Assistant Vice President, Office of Institutional Research & Analytics | Rowan University

A Guide to Effective Tableau Dashboard Documentation

4:00 PM – 4:45 PM | Location: Timberlawn

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

Clear and effective documentation is essential for ensuring that Tableau dashboards remain understandable, maintainable, and trustworthy over time. Unfortunately, many dashboard creators overlook or undervalue the importance of documentation, which can lead to confusion, inefficiencies, and a loss of value. This session provides a practical step-by-step guide for documenting Tableau dashboards, highlighting key components such as data sources, calculations, filters, user instructions, and version control. Attendees will learn techniques for embedding documentation directly within dashboards using Tableau features, as well as maintaining external documentation repositories. Real-world examples and reusable templates will enable participants to adopt documentation practices that foster collaboration, reduce troubleshooting time, and facilitate smoother handoffs. Whether the focus is on institutional research, assessment, or executive reporting, attendees will leave equipped to develop sustainable documentation habits that enhance dashboard usability and promote a culture of data literacy and governance.

Speaker



Preethi Lodha

Director, Data Analytics and Operations | University of Massachusetts President's office

Accreditation and Planning: One Voyage, One Map

4:00 PM – 4:45 PM | Location: Glen Echo

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

In today's dynamic higher education landscape, aligning accreditation and strategic planning is no longer a bureaucratic checkbox-it's a critical leadership function. This session presents a cohesive approach to navigating these parallel processes as one integrated institutional voyage. Participants will explore a practical framework and case-informed strategies that connect compliance and strategy into a unified planning map. The session will also highlight how automation can support this alignment by streamlining evidence collection, enhancing analytical capacity, and reducing redundancies. Attendees will gain access to interactive tools and examples that empower them to lead with both clarity and agility. Whether you're launching a new strategic plan, preparing for reaffirmation, or seeking greater coherence across institutional functions, this session provides real-world insights and actionable guidance. Designed for IR/IE professionals across experience levels, it equips participants to chart a sustainable, data-informed course that transforms compliance into innovation.

Speaker



Nasrin Fatima

Associate Provost for Assessment and Analytics | Binghamton University

Measuring Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

4:00 PM – 4:45 PM | Location: Linden Oak

CULTURE, CLIMATE, & BELONGING: EMPOWERING STUDENT SUCCESS

LGBTQ students and employees are often invisible in higher education data. Only a fraction of colleges and universities collect administrative data that can be used in multiple contexts and siloed survey data often focuses on challenges rather than assets or achievements. As a result, campus leaders can't make data-informed decisions and may under-serve populations that are under-represented in quantitative institutional self-portraits. This session will present the results of twelve months of grant-supported research on strategies to collect and secure voluntary data about sexual orientation and gender identity. Participants will learn about major models already in use, one university's development and adoption process, recommended items for surveys and administrative data collection, and privacy safeguards necessary for ethical practice.

Speaker



Trent Kennedy

Senior Institutional Research Analyst | Georgetown University

Enrollment Revenue Impact: Developing a Tuition Model

5:00 PM – 5:45 PM | Location: Strathmore B

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This presentation showcases a tuition modeling framework designed to help institutions forecast tuition revenue and support strategic planning amid enrollment and funding uncertainties. Using SQL and Power BI, the model integrates historical data, tuition schedules, and projected enrollment to simulate revenue outcomes across key student groups (e.g., in-state, out-of-state, undergraduate, graduate). The session will provide a walkthrough of the development process, including data sourcing, student-tuition matching logic, forecasting methodology, and dashboard functionality. Attendees will learn how to build an interactive interface that allows users to manually adjust tuition rates and immediately visualize resulting changes in revenue projections.

Speaker



Derek Deeney

Data and Reporting Manager | University System of Maryland

The Art of the Question in Survey Design

5:00 PM – 5:45 PM | Location: Forest Glen

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

Effective survey design is crucial for obtaining reliable and valid data. This presentation delves into the art of writing survey questions, emphasizing clarity, neutrality, and respondent engagement. We will explore best practices for crafting questions that minimize bias, avoid ambiguity, and ensure comprehensibility across diverse populations. Techniques for balancing open-ended and closed-ended questions to capture both quantitative and qualitative insights will be discussed. Additionally, the session will highlight common pitfalls in question design and provide strategies for pre-testing and refining questions to enhance data quality. Attendees will learn practical tools to improve their surveys to maximize their results.

Speaker



Shama Akhtar

Director of Institutional Surveys & Analysis | Bowie State University

JASP: Accessible, Free, and Open-Source Stats Tool

5:00 PM – 5:45 PM | Location: Middlebrook

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

Institutional research (IR) offices are increasingly expected to deliver timely, accessible, and reproducible analyses for statistical analysis. This presentation introduces JASP, a free and open-source statistical software that offers an intuitive interface and powerful capabilities for IR. Attendees will receive a practical overview of JASP's features, including its ability to produce transparent, publication-ready output and facilitate both basic and advanced statistical analyses. Through real-world examples and a live demonstration, the session will highlight how JASP can streamline workflows related to statistical analysis and reporting. The presentation will also explore how JASP's user-friendly design supports broader engagement with data across campus stakeholders. Attendees will leave with concrete ideas for how to integrate JASP into their office and improve the accessibility and efficiency of their statistical analysis and reporting processes.

Speakers



James Salamon

Associate Director of Institutional Research and Assessment | Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences



Vilosh Veeramani

Director of Institutional Research and Decision Support | Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering

Reviving the Student Voice with Focus Groups

5:00 PM – 5:45 PM | Location: Strathmore A

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

As survey fatigue intensifies and response rates decline, institutions are left with less confidence in the data to inform planning, assessment, and student success efforts. This session explores how focus groups can be a robust, strategic response, helping revive the student voice while producing richer, more actionable insights. Using examples from higher education institutional research, we will examine when and how to use focus groups, design inclusive and purposeful questions, plan logistics effectively, and synthesize qualitative data into institutional narratives that drive change. Attendees will leave with practical tools and renewed confidence in qualitative research as a core method in their work.

Speakers



Susan Hayes

Executive Director | Fashion Institute of Technology - SUNY



Thomas Miller
Research Analyst | Fashion Institute of Technology

Co-Pilot & Me: An Innovative Dashboarding Duo

5:00 PM – 5:45 PM | Location: Timberlawn

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

To meet accreditation requirements, we needed an assessment plan that integrates multiple elements from various sources, including documents and data. Our goal was to create a centralized Power BI dashboard that provides a clear, at-a-glance view of plan status and the supporting evidence used in decision-making. This presentation will explore how Microsoft Co-Pilot was used to test the feasibility of building the dashboard, assist in overcoming technical challenges, and accelerate development-despite limited prior experience. We'll share practical tips, lessons learned, and strategies for building a similar dashboard. Additionally, we'll demonstrate how the dashboard data was integrated into ProgressIQ to provide seamless access for stakeholders. We'll also outline a potential solution for enabling collaborative workgroups and simplifying evidence collection. Attendees will leave with insights into leveraging Co-Pilot and Power BI to streamline accreditation processes and improve data accessibility for decision-making.

Speaker



Erin Dunleavy
Director of Assessment | Wilkes University

Shifting Academic Program Review Materials to Tableau

5:00 PM – 5:45 PM | Location: Glen Echo

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

This session will detail how one IR/IE office shifted program review materials from static Excel files to Tableau dashboards. The previous Excel deliverables were cumbersome and time consuming to produce, provided little flexibility to include cross-sectional information, and difficult for non-data savvy audiences to consume and interpret. Our move to Tableau allowed for data production streamlining, the ability to report out multiple demographic layers, and helped democratize data to our academic audiences. The presenters will discuss inspirations, progress, lessons learned, difficulties encountered, and continued plans to improve the final product. Attendees are encouraged to share their experiences and challenges in providing similar institutional data.

Speakers



Shawn LaRoche
Associate Director of Analytics, Reporting and Research | Mount Wachusett Community College



Veronika (Nika) Ancukiewicz
Sr. Research Analyst | Mount Wachusett Community College

Setting Goals & Creating Your Data Governance Roadmap

5:00 PM – 5:45 PM | Location: Linden Oak

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

Data Governance or Data Intelligence is often identified as a key initiative in an organization. However, many efforts to implement data governance encounter challenges in starting or maintaining momentum. Data governance success is often built from having a good assessment of your organizations' strengths, having clear actionable goals, and a pragmatic roadmap for implementation. This session will cover best practices for creating your data governance roadmap. Covered in this session: * Current-state data governance assessment strategies * Developing data governance recommendations * Defining the scope and prioritizing which recommendations to implement * Defining the scope(s) of your data governance initiative with prioritization * Building an actionable data governance plan and moving from planning to doing * Maintaining momentum and buy-in * Measuring success and return-on-investment Attendees will get access to a sample assessment workbook. Hope you can join us on this important topic.

Speaker



Jim Walery
CEO and Founder | iData Inc.

Dinner Groups leave starting at 6:00 pm

6:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

Continental Breakfast

7:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Salon A-D

SIG - Maryland IR (MDAIR)

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Middlebrook

The Maryland Association for Institutional Research is the professional organization for Institutional Researchers in the state and surrounding areas (including members from DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, and WV). This SIG will bring current, former, and prospective

members together to network, meet-and-greet Board members, discuss upcoming MdAIR conferences and events, and the MdAIR Board will provide updates as well as a guided listening session for attendees. Come out to meet your peers and organization leaders!

Speakers



Daniel Sisco

Asst. Director | Loyola University



Ross Conover

Senior Research Analyst | Montgomery College

SIG - New Hampshire IR

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Linden Oak

Connect with New Hampshire IR professionals!

Speaker



Joyce Larson

Director Of Institutional Research | Saint Anselm College

SIG - Rhode Island IR

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Oakley

Meeting of Rhode Island IR members.

Speaker



Kristen Procopio

Associate Director of Institutional Research & Planning | Rhode Island College

SIG - Balancing Data and Wellbeing

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Glen Echo

This SIG builds on NEAIR's Guiding Light webinar *Balancing Data and Wellbeing: Strategies for Self-Care, Advocacy, and Success*. Join colleagues in an engaging conversation about the realities of our work, share strategies for setting boundaries and managing stress, and explore ways to foster a supportive and sustainable professional culture that values balance and wellbeing.

Speaker



Karen Egypt

Assistant Director of Assessment | University of Maryland College Park

SIG - Association of Independent Colleges & Universities of PA (AICUP)

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Timberlawn

The AICUP SIG offers member institutions a chance to learn more about current and upcoming AICUP initiatives, along with a brief legislative update. This SIG also provides a valuable opportunity for institutional researchers from AICUP institutions to network, collaborate, and connect with AICUP staff.

Speaker



Gayle Baker

Manager of Research and Special Studies | AICUP

SIG - Massachusetts Public Colleges & Universities

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM | Location: Forest Glen

Come and connect with your IR colleagues at other public colleges and universities in Massachusetts.

Speaker



Tiffany Parker

Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness | Mount Wachusett CC

Keynote: Trading Spreadsheets for Superpowers: How Agentic AI is Reinventing Research

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM | Location: Salon A-D

Imagine a world where institutional researchers no longer wrestle with endless spreadsheets – instead, they orchestrate fleets of AI agents that learn, adapt, and act at breathtaking speed. In the face of rapid demographic shifts, growing financial constraints, and ever-higher expectations in higher education, Agentic AI isn't simply a futuristic upgrade, it's a practical lifeline.

This session will cut through the AI buzz to reveal how agentic systems are already evolving research: blending structured and unstructured data, automating time-consuming analysis, and unlocking time for deep strategy, insight and student impact. We'll draw on cross-sector insights to separate genuine breakthroughs from hype.

You will walk away with more than inspiration – expect actionable framework for ethical AI adoption, hands-on governance tips, and practical strategies to drive measurable results. Learn what new skills IR professionals will need to lead in this agentic age and leave equipped and inspired to launch your AI pilot with confidence.

Join to reimagine research, untangle the myths, and chart a path toward responsible, human-centered AI innovation in higher education.

Speaker



Tamara Askew

AI in Higher Education, National Capability Lead | Deloitte Consulting

Early Alerts as Signals of Engagement & Persistence

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM | Location: Linden Oak

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

When a faculty member raises an alert, it signals more than just academic risk; it begins a story about how engaged a student is academically and how connected they may feel to the institution. This session explores how early alert data, often viewed as reactive, can be transformed into a proactive lens on student persistence. Using the content of faculty-submitted alerts from the first year, a composite behavioral score was created and tested across prior cohorts. The results revealed this metric as one of the strongest predictors of persistence, outperforming many traditional variables. Built entirely from existing systems, this approach requires no new tools or purchases, just a creative rethinking of what is already available. Alongside key findings, the session encourages a mindset of curiosity and experimentation, offering a framework for using overlooked data creatively to support student success, particularly in resource-conscious environments.

Speaker



Nicholas Vaught

Director of Institutional Effectiveness | Goucher College

Impactful Data Relationships: Learning by Doing

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM | Location: Strathmore A

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

IR professionals have a wealth of information at their fingertips, but face the challenge of effective engagement with campus-wide data users to improve data quality and increase access to resources for data-driven decision making, especially if the institution has a history of working in silos. The presenter addressed this challenge head-on and focused directly on building relationships between the IR Office and other departments in order to improve communication as the foundation for data literacy and distribution. These efforts have quickly developed into one of the most rewarding parts of the presenter's work, and they have seen that successfully building relationships provides a strong foundation for growth in data literacy and ensures continual buy-in with data quality efforts at the institution. The presentation will cover strategies for developing campus-wide relationships, effective communication about data quality and application, and examples of deliverables and data events.

Speaker



Alison Preston

Director of Institutional Research | Hagerstown Community College

Leveraging NLP to Transform Course Evaluation

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM | Location: Glen Echo

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

Course evaluations are essential tools for assessing instructional effectiveness and informing continuous improvement in higher education. While open-ended responses yield valuable qualitative insights, their scale and variability often render them difficult to analyze systematically. As a result, this rich source of feedback remains underutilized in faculty development and programmatic decision-making. This project addresses that limitation by employing advanced Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques to analyze a large longitudinal dataset of course evaluation comments. By leveraging topic modeling, clustering, and thematic analysis, the project transforms unstructured student feedback into actionable insights. These insights are designed to support evidence-based improvements in teaching, inform institutional planning, and elevate the strategic use of qualitative data in assessment practices. This approach not only enhances the impact of course evaluations but also demonstrates how AI-driven methods can advance the field of institutional research and effectiveness through scalable, rigorous analysis of student voice.

Speakers



Meng Yi

Associate Director for Survey Research | NJIT



Shivam Manish Sarang

Survey Data Research Analyst | New Jersey Institute of Technology



Gurmehar Singh

Undergraduate Survey Research Data Analyst | Grace Hopper Artificial Intelligence Institute

I'm in Charge Now? Leading with Humility & Confidence

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM | Location: Timberlawn

SKILLS COMPETENCIES, CAREER TRAJECTORIES, LEADERSHIP & MANAGING CHANGE

This presentation will share a framework I developed through an unexpected and initially hesitant transition into an IR leadership role. I identified six areas of personal and professional exploration that helped me lead with humility, purpose, and growing confidence. These include distinguishing leadership from management and crafting visions for both; collaborating with leadership and stakeholders on the role's parameters; using the transition to assess individual and team strengths; aligning priorities with institutional and office needs/resources; empowering staff through shared growth; and practicing grace toward myself and others. These areas will be connected to dimensions of relevant leadership, stakeholder, organizational trust, and psychological safety theories. This session will offer practical insights for those unexpectedly called into leadership, especially those who may initially hesitate to answer the call. Attendees will leave with strategies to embrace leadership transitions as opportunities for personal growth, organizational renewal, and intentional, values-driven decision-making.

Speaker



Robin Beads

Assoc Dir, Institutional Research & Assessment | American University

AI IR Assistant: Data and Knowledge at Your Fingertips

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM | Location: Middlebrook

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

Institutional Research and Effectiveness offices often struggle with fragmented data systems, repetitive requests, and lost institutional knowledge due to staff turnover. This presentation introduces an AI-powered Smart Assistant that uses natural language processing and retrieval-augmented generation to automate data access, reduce manual workload, and preserve institutional memory. Staff can ask questions like "How to calculate FTE?" and receive contextualized, policy-aligned responses with documentation links. The tool supports aligning definitions across platforms and reinforces governance through role-based access and source traceability. This session provides a roadmap for automating high-effort IR/IE functions-empowering professionals to focus more on insight and strategy, and less on routine retrieval.

Speaker



Xilin Zhang

Associate Director of Institutional research | New Jersey Institute of Technology

Historical Data Misuse and IR's Ethical Imperative

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM | Location: Strathmore B

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

IR professionals serve a critical role in upholding ethical data use, promoting data literacy, and fostering responsible data stewardship, often safeguarding against an unknown future. Rapid developments in technology and changes in higher education necessitate a proactive ethical stance. History offers compelling cautionary tales for data misuse: from the U.S. Census Bureau's data being repurposed for WWII internment to the eugenics movement's statistical misrepresentations, and modern algorithmic profiling exemplified by Cambridge Analytica. This presentation will dissect these historical precedents, directly connecting them to current challenges in higher education, including predictive analytics, integration with AI tools, and data governance. Attendees will gain practical strategies and consider best practices, empowering IR to protect student privacy and ensure equitable outcomes.

Speaker



Kim Speerschneider

Director of Institutional Research and Data Analytics | Wesleyan University

Data Visualization on a Budget: A Small School's Story

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM | Location: Forest Glen

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This session offers a practical, actionable guide to building impactful data dashboards without significant investment. We will demonstrate how to leverage tools your institution likely already has, focusing on Looker Studio, a free platform for Google Schools. Attendees will be shown how to build three distinct dashboards, showcasing different approaches to data sourcing and sharing. The first dashboard utilizes a materialized view from our CRM, Slate, and we will walk through the process of connecting it directly to Looker Studio for revenue and enrollment forecasting. The second is also for admissions, but built from a static dataset exported into a Google Sheet. The third dashboard pulls data from a Career Services survey, using a Google Sheet as the source, and is embedded on our college intranet for campus-wide access. Participants will learn how to implement these strategies and drive meaningful, cost-effective change in their own departments.

Speaker



Nathan Wright

Director, Institutional Research & Enrollment Strategy | Muhlenberg College

Mentoring Matters: Faculty/Staff Support of Students

10:55 AM – 11:25 AM | Location: Strathmore A

CULTURE, CLIMATE, & BELONGING: EMPOWERING STUDENT SUCCESS

This session presents findings from the Penn State University Student Experience Survey (SES) on faculty and staff mentoring of students. The analysis centers on Faculty/Staff Support (FSS)-students' comfort in discussing personal issues or decisions with faculty or staff. Data from 2014, 2017, and 2023 reveal that students who report FSS also tend to report higher levels of belonging, confidence, and skill development; however, the direction of this relationship is likely mixed, with FSS both influencing and being influenced by these factors. The most significant benefit of FSS is observed among students with lower self-confidence and those less engaged in campus life. The presentation also highlights variation in FSS across locations, academic divisions, and class years. This underscores the importance of nuanced assessments and how fostering inclusive, supportive relationships between students and university personnel can promote equitable educational outcomes.

Speaker



Eliza Bradley

Data Analyst | Penn State University

Prompt and Circumstance: Using LLMs in Higher Ed

10:55 AM – 11:25 AM | Location: Glen Echo

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

Institutional Researchers offer knowledge, talent, and insights that can't be replaced by artificial intelligence (AI). However, AI tools, especially large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT, can act like a personal assistant, simplifying or speeding up everyday tasks. This session will introduce what AI is (and isn't), including the misperception that LLMs are just "a better Google." Participants will learn how to write thoughtful prompts that produce more accurate results from these tools. Along the way, we'll explore practical uses for LLMs, including generating clear text, identifying grammar issues, writing survey questions, and suggesting creative data visualizations. We'll also cover limitations of LLMs, including when LLMs make things up, misinterpret questions, or give outdated information. All AI-generated content, especially survey questions and data outputs, must be critically reviewed by IR professionals before being shared publicly. These tools support, but never replace, professional expertise.

Speakers



Nicole Menendez

Research Associate | Syracuse University



Brad Fetes

Research Associate | Syracuse University

The Persistence Puzzle: Connecting Financial Need

10:55 AM – 11:25 AM | Location: Linden Oak

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

The Persistence Puzzle: Connecting Financial Need, Belonging, and Academic Success As institutions strive to improve retention and graduation outcomes across all student populations, data-driven insights are crucial for identifying barriers and informing effective interventions. This presentation proposal focuses on the application of data analysis in understanding the key factors that influence student persistence and how to utilize results effectively. Building on a recent cohort analysis, this presentation aims to deepen the understanding of retention data to identify disparities and assess which factors predict retention. By sharing the results of our recent cohort analysis, which found that financial unmet need is a critical issue affecting the academic progress of many students, the presentation will provide actionable recommendations to support IR offices in analyzing data and developing strategies. IR professionals will directly benefit by learning how to create targeted data analysis strategies designed to close achievement gaps and enhance student success.

Speakers



Irene Irudayam

AVP, Institutional Research & Planning | Vermont State University



Carole Pickett

Director of Institutional Research | Vermont State University

Meet Our New Staff Member: Gemini

10:55 AM – 11:25 AM | Location: Middlebrook

SKILLS COMPETENCIES, CAREER TRAJECTORIES, LEADERSHIP & MANAGING CHANGE

Ever wondered how AI could genuinely enhance your institutional research office? This session explores integrating Gemini AI into your team, envisioning it as a highly capable new colleague. We'll demonstrate how connecting Gemini to Google Workspace can significantly expand your office's capacity. You'll discover real-world applications for Gemini, from optimizing data analysis for platforms like Tableau and Power BI, to refining code, and streamlining data cleaning and merging. We'll also delve into its utility for administrative tasks, such as drafting policy documents and summarizing communications from emails and calendar events. Participants will leave with practical strategies to elevate their work and strengthen the strategic contributions of their institutional research efforts.

Speakers



Tom McGuinness

Director of Institutional Research, Analysis, and Planning | Bates College



Erika Stump

Assistant Director - Office of Institutional Research, Analysis & Planning | Bates College

From Chaos to Clarity: Data Cataloging in Action

10:55 AM – 11:25 AM | Location: Strathmore B

DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA LITERACY

Outdated and inconsistent data can hinder decision-making, strategic planning, and external reporting. At Rowan University, the Office of Institutional Research & Analytics (OIRA) is advancing data governance and literacy by embedding metadata cataloging into institutional research workflows. Using Informatica's Cloud Data Governance and Catalog (CDGC), cross-functional teams from across the institution collaborate to define business terms, assign stewardship roles, and document data lineage for key academic and survey datasets. Participants will explore the communication and workflow strategies that supported three critical initiatives: (1) mapping external survey elements to internal data sources and definitions, (2) refining online program classifications to reflect evolving modalities, and (3) validating a certified program inventory spanning multiple systems. Attendees will gain insight into how shared documentation, consistent terminology, and accessible metadata tools—such as glossary terms, stakeholder assignments, and lineage visualizations—can reduce ambiguity, promote alignment, and strengthen reporting readiness across institutional research activities.

Speaker



Shante Walker

Institutional Research Analyst | Rowan University

Mapping the Gaps: AI-Assisted Curriculum Dashboards

10:55 AM – 11:25 AM | Location: Forest Glen

DATA, ANALYTICS, AND DECISION-MAKING

This session showcases the transformation of a complex Excel-based curriculum map into a user-friendly, interactive dashboard. Participants will learn how Microsoft Copilot supported early vision testing and helped bridge technical gaps during the development of Power BI visualizations. These visualizations enabled deeper analysis of curriculum data, revealing gaps, redundancies, and the depth of required outcomes and topics. A guided walkthrough of the dashboard in ProgressIQ will demonstrate how it streamlined curriculum review and supported more efficient decision-making. Additionally, the visualizations uncovered sequencing issues that prompted the Assessment and Curriculum Team (ACT) to reevaluate mapping practices and topic introductions. This session highlights how AI-assisted tools and individual innovation can enhance curriculum design and analysis.

Speaker



Erin Dunleavy

Director of Assessment | Wilkes University

Leverage & Triangulate: Forecasting Student Success

10:55 AM – 11:25 AM | Location: Oakley

ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, ACCREDITATION, AND IE

Student retention and graduation rates are a mainstay of IR work and identifying obstacles to student persistence can be challenging. This presentation will present a model for leveraging a variety of data collection methods (surveys and forms) to combine with student level data (characteristics and background) and information held by other offices (student affairs, registrar, dean's office) to reveal different patterns in students' trajectories from admissions, course completions, and breaks in attendance. Sharing this information with student services across campus helps to identify programs and services that can enhance student experience. The presentation will conclude with how our institution is using this information as a continuous feedback loop on the effectiveness of student support programs and the changes that have been made to better support student needs.

Speaker



Adela Langrock

Director Assessment and Institutional Research | Middlebury College

Conference Closing

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM | Location: Salon A-D