2020 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The eighth iteration of ASAHP’s Leadership Development Program will occur in 2020. Priority will be given to applicants who are department chairpersons/directors, associate/assistant deans, and new deans (appointed within the previous 24 months at the time of applying). Self-nominations are permissible. The deadline for submitting electronic applications has been extended to December 6, 2019 and they should be sent to jacob@asaahp.org. Participants will be notified of their selection in January 2020. Additional information can be obtained at https://asaahp.squarespace.com/config/.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE SURVEY

The second iteration of the revised Association’s Institutional Profile Survey (IPS) has been launched and will remain open through January 31, 2020. Long considered by deans and directors at member institutions to be a key benefit of belonging to ASAHP, the study produces data of immense value.

Newly revised, the study is enriched by the incorporation of some new data elements. A 2017-2018 Report was prepared from the first iteration as a means of illustrating and summarizing survey results. Data are provided for 32 different kinds of academic programs, including number of faculty and FTEs in them. Deans and directors are encouraged to identify personnel on their respective campuses to collect the necessary data. An aim is to have all member institutions participate in this important undertaking.

JOURNAL OF ALLIED HEALTH

The last three months have witnessed a surge in manuscripts being submitted. Peer review represents an essential aspect of determining which articles to accept for publication. New reviewers always are welcome, especially from physical therapy, occupational therapy, nutrition/dietetics, speech-language pathology, and interprofessional education and practice. Doctorate-level education and experience reviewing articles for other journals are preferred characteristics. Please send an expression of interest in becoming a reviewer to thomas@asaahp.org.

RURAL AMERICA PROFILE

Rural America in 2019 is a place often discussed and debated, but not particularly well understood. In the minds of much of the citizenry, it can be viewed as a mythic realm, with boundaries and terrain defined by pop cultural imagery and datelines from small towns, such as amber waves of grain in front of an old red barn punctuated by a news account from a region defined as Appalachia.

As attention and discussions grow about how to address or fix the challenges in the nation’s rural locales, a simple interpretation will no longer suffice. The geographic, demographic, and socioeconomic landscape of rural America is remarkably diverse. Depending on the community in question, rural America can be hilly and remote or it can begin at an exit off an interstate with flat lands stretching to the horizon.

Its racial and ethnic composition can look like America from 50 years ago or it can be ahead of the demographic changes that are reshaping the nation. Its economy might be driven by tractors and commodity prices, but more often by small factories and the retail trade.

Rural America should not be considered as monolithic in nature. Instead, it consists of wide-ranging, evolving communities having different strengths, facing different trials, and needing different policy solutions. A new report from the American Communities Project should inform a growing discussion about the “urban/rural” divide by showing the enormous complexity underpinning the phrase “rural America” in 2019.

Issues, such as portions of the population in either poor or only fair health are discussed. The document also may serve as a useful substrate for consideration of challenges involving the health professions workforce and the availability of online educational opportunities for students who live in remote areas. The report can be obtained at https://www.americancommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/A-New-Portrait-of-Rural-America_Sept.-26-2019.pdf.
THE BERMUDA TRIAD

A paper from New America, “The Bermuda Triad: Where Accountability Goes To Die,” examines the role of the “triad” — states, accreditors and the federal government — in holding higher education accountable. The U.S. hosts thousands of poor- and under-performing colleges, where millions of students are paying, and often borrowing large amounts of money. Unfortunately, most students do not know that schools are underperforming until it is too late.

Nationally, only about 42% of students complete a four-year degree in that period of time, with rates that are much lower for Black (22%) and Hispanic (33%) students, and fewer than one in three complete a certificate or associate degree within one-and-a-half times the length of time it should take. At hundreds of colleges, graduates who attended school using federal aid leave with typical earnings of less than $25,000, with many having well below the average earnings of a worker with only a high school diploma. More than a million borrowers each year fall behind and default on their loans for the first time.

The paper’s authors indicate that the system of shared accountability devolves into a game of hot potato, with no one member of the triad willing to take serious action against an institution of higher education that falls short of expectations until other members of the triad have responded. The document can be obtained at https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/bermuda-triad/.

EDUCATION ROI

Using data from the expanded U.S. Department of Education’s College Scorecard, a report from Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce ranks 4,500 colleges and universities by return on investment. A First Try at ROI: Ranking 4,500 Colleges finds that bachelor’s degrees from private colleges, on average, have higher ROI than degrees from public colleges 40 years after enrollment. Community colleges and many certificate programs have the highest returns in the short term, 10 years after enrollment, although returns from bachelor’s degrees eventually overtake those of most two-year credentials.

The data offer prospective students and their parents a sharper look at what their investment really means through the lens of tuition cost, debt, and earnings. It also can serve as a vital tool in holding colleges and universities accountable for whether the degrees they confer prove to be valuable financially. The report can be obtained at https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/CollegeROI/.

HOUSEHOLD DEBT INCREASE

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York’s Center for Microeconomic Data’s (CMD’s) latest Quarterly Report on Household Debt and Credit reveals that total household debt increased by $92 billion (0.7%) to $13.95 trillion in the third quarter of 2019. It was the twenty-first consecutive quarterly increase, and the total is now $1.3 trillion higher, in nominal terms, than the previous peak of $12.68 trillion in the third quarter of 2008. Overall household debt is 25.1% above the 2013Q2 trough. Mortgage balances shown on consumer credit reports on September 30, 2019 stood at $9.44 trillion, a $31 billion increase from 2019Q2. Non-housing balances increased by $64 billion in the third quarter, with increases across the board, including $18 billion in auto loans, $13 billion in credit card balances, and $20 billion in student loans.

A blog post by New York Fed economists explored student loans by race and found that individuals from predominantly-Black and Hispanic neighborhoods were more likely to borrow to pay for college and face higher default rates on their student loans. The Quarterly Report can be obtained at https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/interactive/householdcredit/data/pdf/HHDC_2019Q3.pdf.

ONLINE MASTER’S MARKET

Master’s programs currently make up nearly 16% of completions across all levels of U.S. higher education. An analysis by Eduventures of online master’s programs can be obtained at https://encoura.org/2019-ipeds-update-five-insights-into-the-online-masters-market/?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiWTJVM1pEVTVabU5oTIRreilsInQiOi12NEJHQRdUxxzbzdpbWM0Q21JVeW5xVHNtamu0SGLiUfmFDWXJuMG9kY0J1eFwvWERRdnI2OFJlalEzWHR5Y2sxcElDUkNiNWExNWJtSHR0OGF6c0x0eGQzOUdUXC96NFdikWWNrN3NUWXN2N1NwaFpFZW9RXC9zdEIrSXJlcE5GRGlciJ9.

GRADUATE EDUCATION ORGANIZATION

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) published a research brief providing insights into how graduate education is organized and administered in the U.S. and Canada. Its primary finding affirms that the majority of responding institutions organize the responsibilities of graduate education within an organizational unit led by a dean. This organizational structure provides graduate education administrators with leadership roles that are similar in stature and expectations to those of academic colleges and collegiate deans. The brief can be obtained at https://cgsnet.org/cffinder/userfiles/files/CGS_Research_Brief_O%26A_Web.pdf.