The Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research (SIHER) is the umbrella organization for research on higher education at Stanford University. SIHER is home to several sponsored research projects that examine organizational and policy issues from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives drawing on educational theory and social science research methods. Founded in 1989 by William Massy and Patricia J. Gumport (director since 1995), SIHER conducts research on changes in finance, curriculum, public higher education system design, faculty, management and academic governance across community colleges, comprehensive state universities and research universities. SIHER disseminates findings to policymakers and campus leaders who are in a position to improve transitions to postsecondary education, the effectiveness of higher education organizations, and the design of state systems. Recent funding has been provided by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Educational Research and Improvement, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Association of American Universities, the Hewlett Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Irvine Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Atlantic Philanthropies, Inc. SIHER has also collaborated with EDUCOM, the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the University of Michigan’s Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, the Community College Research Center and the Institute for Education and the Economy at Columbia’s Teachers College, the Consortium for Policy Research in Education, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the University of Pennsylvania’s Institute for Research on Higher Education.

Current Projects

Current research projects at SIHER include: the National Center for Postsecondary Improvement, a research collaborative addressing contemporary issues in higher education; the Bridge Project, a study of K-16 transitions and postsecondary success; and Assessing Student Learning and Accounting for Student Achievement, a five-year study of accountability and assessment in higher education.

National Center for Postsecondary Improvement. NCPI’s research addresses concerns of policymakers and institutional leaders, such as studying student transitions from high school to college and from college to work; developing data sets and instrumentation to examine student outcomes and assessment; and analyzing planning and restructuring activities. Through research and dissemination, NCPI offers its constituents—policymakers, employers, faculty, students, and administrators—data analysis, recommendations, and tools so they can better adapt to, and even thrive in, a rapidly changing environment.

K-16 Projects. A second major SIHER activity is the K-16 Projects, led by Mike Kirst. The primary project, The Bridge Project, is funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts with additional support from the U.S. Department of Education through NCPI. An overarching aim is to enhance secondary student preparation for higher education and to better align higher education admissions and placement standards with K-12 curriculum. The project analyzes disjunctions between K-12 and postsecondary education concepts and practices and recommends changes. Another project, Standards for Success, analyzes the relationship between state K-12 standards/assessments and university admissions. Sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and with contributions from the Association of American Universities, the project is developing a national clearinghouse of state educational standards while working with universities to articulate desired skills. SIHER’s K-16 projects also include a community college research project, and collaborations with the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Education Commission of the States, the Education Trust and the California Master Plan Committee.

Assessing Student Learning and Accounting for Student Achievement. Led by Richard Shavelson, this five-year project evaluates assessments of student learning and alternative accountability systems through case study research. Findings will be used to recommend principles for measuring student learning and redesigning systems to improve teaching and learning.

The Effects of Racial Diversity on Critical Thinking Among College Students. This study seeks to test the hypothesis that racial diversity in small group discussions among college students enhances their critical thinking. Anthony Lising Antonio and Kenji Hakuta are the Co-Principal Investigators. Download the latest report, Effects of Racial Diversity on Complex Thinking in College Students, from the SIHER website.
Personnel

Patricia J. Gumport, Director of SIHER - Dr. Gumport concurrently directs SIHER and NCPI, and is Professor of Education at Stanford University. As principal investigator, she has managed over $16 million in funding. She recently led a national agenda-setting initiative that culminated in *Beyond Dead Reckoning: Research Priorities for Redirecting American Higher Education*. Her expertise extends across a wide range of topics in higher education, currently on organizational restructuring and curricular change, public higher education system design, and case study methods in research and policy analysis. Publications include five books (three co-edited) and over sixty peer-reviewed articles, chapters and reports. Dr. Gumport has assisted in state and campus academic planning and advised policymakers and campus leaders in the U.S. and in seven countries.

Dr. Gumport holds a Ph.D. from Stanford University in Higher Education, a MA from Stanford in Sociology, and a BA (Phi beta kappa) in Philosophy and English from Colgate University. She has received, from the Association for the Study of Higher Education, the Outstanding Dissertation of the Year Award (1998) and the Distinguished Early Career Scholar Award (1993). Other awards include Young Leader of the Academy Award (1998), Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship from the National Academy of Education (1989-1991), and Outstanding Teaching Award from the Stanford School of Education (1995).

Michael Kirst, Associate Director - Dr. Kirst is Professor of Education and Business Administration at Stanford University. A prolific writer, he has authored ten books, including *Schools in Conflict: Political Turbulence in American Education* (with F. Wirt, 1992), *Federal Aid to Education*, and *Who Controls our Schools* (with W.H. Freeman, 1984). He has published on school finance politics, curriculum politics, intergovernmental relations, and education reform. Dr. Kirst disseminates his research through formal academic outlets, but also uses newspaper opinion pages, media interviews, and appearances on radio and TV.

Dr. Kirst received his bachelor's degree (Phi beta kappa) in economics from Dartmouth College, his M.P.A. in government and economics from Harvard University, and his Ph.D. in political economy and government from Harvard. He is Co-Director of Policy Analysis for California Education, a California state education policy research group funded by the Hewlett Foundation. Dr. Kirst has been a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences, a member of the National Academy of Education since 1979, vice-president of the American Educational Research Association, commissioner of the Education Commissions of the States, and associate editor of the *Journal of Educational Evaluation and Policy*.

Anthony Lising Antonio, Assistant Director - Dr. Antonio is Assistant Professor of Education at Stanford University. Dr. Antonio's work focuses on access and equity, the impact of diverse campuses on student outcomes, and the sociology of student friendship groups. He has written several articles and papers on the impact of diversity on college students, and his work has been widely cited in amicus briefs written for the University of Michigan affirmative action cases. Dr. Antonio is also a co-author on the major SIHER report on K-16 policy reform, *Betraying the College Dream: How Disconnected K-12 and Postsecondary Education Systems Undermine Student Aspirations*.

Dr. Antonio received his Ph.D. and MA in Higher Education from UCLA and also holds engineering degrees from Stanford and the University of California, Berkeley. Along with his co-authors, he was awarded the American Educational Research Association (Division J) Publication of the Year Award in 1999. He sits on the editorial boards of the *Journal of College Student Development*, *Review of Higher Education*, *American Educational Research Journal*, and *Change Magazine*.

John D. Jennings, Research Associate - Dr. Jennings has over two decades of professional experience conducting qualitative and quantitative studies in postsecondary education. His methodological expertise is particularly strong in case study research using interviews and institutional data. Dr. Jennings has worked on research projects in several domains within higher education from organizational restructuring, academic planning and finance, to faculty productivity and curriculum modeling. He earned a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from Stanford University, a MA in Sociology also from Stanford, a MS in Counseling and College Student Personnel, from Radford University, and a BA in History from Duke University.

William F. Massy, Senior Researcher - Dr. Massy is Professor Emeritus of Education and Business Administration at Stanford and president of The Jackson Hole Higher Education Group, Inc. His expertise includes academic productivity and quality, quantitative methods for academic decision-making and planning, and the development of institutional strategic visions. Dr. Massy earned his Ph.D. in Economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Richard Shavelson, Senior Researcher - Dr. Shavelson is Professor of Education at Stanford University, where he earned his Ph.D. in Educational Psychology. His current research examines accountability and the assessment of student outcomes, both in K-12 education and higher education. Dr. Shavelson was dean of the Stanford School of Education from 1995 to 2000, and has chaired the National Academy of Sciences’ Board on Testing and Achievement.

Susan Watkins, Director of Finance and Operations - With the Principal Investigator, Ms. Watkins directs and manages SIHER's fiscal operations, budget, annual budget planning, university accounts and subcontracts. She develops internal financial controls, monitors and approves expenditures, and coordinates supplemental awards.

Research Assistants - SIHER is linked with Stanford’s higher education PhD program. Under close faculty supervision, doctoral students acquire skills in research and policy analysis. The program has a strong reputation for preparing both faculty and researchers in nonprofits.