EDITORS’ NOTES
Nicholas A. Bowman, Serge Herzog

1. Applying Regression Discontinuity Design in Institutional Research
Allyson Flaster, Stephen L. DesJardins
The goal of this chapter is to provide a brief introduction to one of the most rigorous nonexperimental analytical methods currently employed by education researchers: regression discontinuity.

2. The Propensity Score Analytical Framework: An Overview and Institutional Research Example
Serge Herzog
Estimating the effect of campus math tutoring support, this study demonstrates the use of propensity score weighted and matched-data analysis and examines the correspondence with results from parametric regression analysis.

3. Item Response Theory: Overview, Applications, and Promise for Institutional Research
Jessica Sharkness
Item Response Theory (IRT) is a measurement theory that is ideal for scale and test development in institutional research, but it is not without its drawbacks. This chapter provides an overview of IRT, describes an example of its use, and highlights the pros and cons of using IRT in applied settings.

4. The Meaning and Interpretation of College Student Self-Reported Gains
Nicholas A. Bowman
This chapter examines the relationship between student self-reported gains and college satisfaction, and it considers whether self-reported gains constitute a form of college satisfaction.

5. Identifying Low-Effort Examinees on Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Comparison of Two Approaches
Joseph A. Rios, Ou Lydia Liu, Brent Bridgeman
This chapter describes a study that compares two approaches (self-reported effort [SRE] and response time effort [RTE]) for identifying low-effort examinees in student learning outcomes assessment. Although both approaches equally discriminated from measures of ability (e.g., SAT scores), RTE was found to have a stronger relationship with test performance, identified more low-effort examinees, and led to higher mean performance upon filtering than the SRE approach.
6. Survey Page Length and Progress Indicators: What Are Their Relationships to Item Nonresponse?
Shimon Sarraf, Malika Tukibayeva
The popularity of online student surveys has been associated with greater item nonresponse. This chapter presents research aimed at exploring what factors might help minimize item nonresponse, such as altering online survey page length and using progress indicators.

7. Effects of Item Order and Response Options in College Student Surveys
Nicholas A. Bowman, Jonathon P. Schuldt
This chapter discusses an experimental study that shows that the order of items on a questionnaire and the response options for those items both affect the results of college student surveys.