



## **Association for Institutional Thought (AFIT)**

### **2014 CALL FOR PAPERS**

**The 35<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of AFIT will be held**

**April 2-5, 2014**

**Albuquerque, New Mexico**

**In conjunction with the Western Social Science Association (WSSA) 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

**Theme for the 2014 Conference in Albuquerque: Affecting Positive Institutional Change: Towards the Non-invidious Recreation of Community**

Some years ago, Marc Tool identified the social-value principle that underlies the research of many institutional economists, namely, “the non-invidious recreation of community.” This refers to developing and applying human knowledge to affect positive social change. Tool’s social-value principle recognizes that human beings live in a particular cultural, institutional setting. The principle refers to analyzing and removing institutions that perpetuate invidious distinctions including distinctions based on income, gender, race, ethnicity, and so on, distinctions that impede the life process. Positive institutional change involves creating institutions that foster community, equality, and democracy including the recognition that the human species lives within and depends on a “community of species.”

Tool’s social-value principle represents a development of ideas stemming from the origins of Institutional Economics. Veblen evaluated institutions in terms of enhancing the life process, recognizing that many institutions serve to perpetuate the existing power relationships.

The founders of Institutional Economics including Thorstein Veblen, J.R. Commons, Karl Polanyi and others stressed the importance of culture, evolution, cumulative causation, and instrumental valuation. **Culture** refers to the ideas and symbols through which individuals interact with each other and the natural world. The ideas and symbols that people use to interpret

the world means that culture matters. **Cumulative causation** conveys the idea that the past influences the present. New technologies and ideas create new possibilities while closing others, propelling human beings to adapt, learn, and change. **Evolution** refers to the notion that economic process involves “the selective adaptation of institutions” and individuals.

**Instrumental valuation** refers to evaluating economic and social phenomena in terms of enhancing the life process.

These core ideas continue in the writings of Clarence Ayres, Warren Samuels, Marc Tool, Anne Mayhew, Walter Neale, Philip Klein, Edythe Miller, Hyman Minsky, Randall Wray, David Hamilton, Warren Gramm, Glenn Atkinson, Janice Peterson, William Waller, James Peach, Bill Dugger, J.R. Stanfield, Janet Knoedler, Dell Champlin, John Henry, Chris Brown and many others. For more information on Institutional Economics, please visit the website:

<http://www.associationforinstitutionalthought.org/division.php?page=about>

As noted, the theme for this conference is **Affecting Positive Institutional Change: Towards the Non-invidious Recreation of Community**. This means examining real-world problems and issues and formulating policies to resolve those issues. This includes analyses of the disenfranchised and marginalized in our society; institutional analyses of invidious distinctions based on gender, race, income, power, and so on; changes in employment and work patterns; new developments in Institutionalist theory, notably, the emergence of Modern Monetary Theory; analyses of corporate power; proposed changes in the regulatory environment; the current paralysis of fiscal policy; the failure of austerity measures; unemployment and the “new normal”; changes in monetary policy; the socialization of risk if not the liabilities of the financial sector; the Economic Crisis of 2008 as a manifestation of the dominance of ceremonial values at the expense of instrumental values; the effect of the crisis on the global economy, especially developing countries; Institutional Economics and the history of economic thought; teaching Institutional Economics, and so on.

**Of course, all aspects of Institutional Economics will be considered.**

Participants are encouraged to propose sessions, roundtables, and papers. Sessions will be limited to four papers, in addition to a moderator and discussant.

**In particular, AFIT encourages graduate students to submit papers for presentation.**

Students will find a receptive, friendly, and encouraging audience. Moreover, AFIT will continue its tradition of offering prizes for outstanding student papers. Interested students are referred to the following link:

[http://www.associationforinstitutionalthought.org/division.php?page=graduate\\_students](http://www.associationforinstitutionalthought.org/division.php?page=graduate_students)

Current membership in **AFIT** is required for presenting a paper; there are no exceptions. A current membership in WSSA is required for participation in the **AFIT** program. **AFIT**'s annual membership dues are \$25.00, and \$15.00 for full-time students and can be paid at the following link: <http://www.associationforinstitutionalthought.org/division.php?page=membership>

Deadline for proposals is **December 1, 2013**.

Please include the following information:

**Willingness to serve as a discussant or moderator:**

Moderator: (y/n)

Discussant: (y/n)

Area of Specialization:

**Format for a "Paper"**

Title:

Author:

Affiliation:

Telephone Number:

E-mail Address:

Other Authors:

Abstract: (200 words or less using "New Times Roman" font and point size 12):

**Proposed Format for a "Panel"**

Title of the Session:

Title of each Paper (appx. 4)

Moderator with Affiliation; Mailing Address; Telephone Number, E-mail Address.

Discussant (s) with Affiliation, Mailing Address; Telephone Number; E-mail Address.

Presenters with Affiliations; Mailing Addresses; Telephone Number; E-mail Address.

Abstract: (200 words or less using "New Times Roman" font and point size 12):

**Please send your proposals by email to John Watkins, Vice President and section coordinator (2013-2014) at [jpwatkins.afit@gmail.com](mailto:jpwatkins.afit@gmail.com). Department of Economics, Westminster College, Salt Lake City, UT USA**