

# SAN FRANCISCO STATE COLLEGE

1600 HOLLOWAY AVENUE

• SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94132

January 5, 1972

Mr. Isaac N. Main  
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Dear Ike:

I am sorry to respond to the letter from John Harrison of November 10 so late. As you can imagine, November and December are pretty busy months on a state college campus. The letter asks individuals for input to determine priorities for the development of instructional support.

It is good to see Information Systems take this kind of initiative for the instructional program, and I think the development of a program library is fairly clear cut. What is needed in addition to the availability of on-line routines is good program write-ups in terms which can be utilized by the non-computer buffs. One of the problems with many of the statistical packages available to us is that they are only usable by those who are fairly sophisticated in the use of computing jargon. I would suggest that the first priority is good program write-ups.

In addition to the program library, there is an on-going need for the development of an on-line data base. These data bases are increasingly available from a variety of sources - the chief of which (at San Francisco State College at the moment) is the data archives of the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research. These archives contain, in machine readable form, the results of practically every major national study in the last 30 years and in addition have such demographic and analytical data as the election returns by state and county for every party and candidate between the present day and 1826. We also have a substantial amount of the 1970 census on mag tape. The availability of on-line data base makes the analytical routines far more useful as an instructional tool. Too frequently we tend to think of the on-line routines as a vehicle for research rather than instruction, but I think the long-range growth potential is in the use of these routines for instructional purposes.

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In any case, it is good to see this kind of progress being made, and I wish you good luck in your efforts.

Sincerely yours,

R. G. Geisler  
Professor

RGG/sr

P. S. I am enclosing a letter from Betty Nesvold outlining a particularly acute problem in the data base area. SFSC is also a member of ICPR which means four colleges in the system spend \$20,000 annually for this data access.

**[Editor's note: the author's signature could not be scanned,]**