

SIXTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AND
INSTRUCTIONAL COUNCIL: 1987-1988

by

Richard E. DeLeon (SFSU)
Chair, 1987-1988

I. INTRODUCTION: This year was an extremely active and eventful one for the SSRIC. The Council wrestled with some significant policy issues, particularly those arising from the Academic Mainframe Computer Replacement Plan and its possible impacts on instructional computing support and services. CCR installed a number of new data bases and expanded its technical support in response to varied campus needs and requests. The ICPSR and Field committees continued the tradition of hard work in recruiting and selecting CSU faculty and students for participation in various programs and activities. CSULA's Ted Anagnoson did a first-rate job arranging and hosting the Thirteenth Annual Social Science Student Research Conference. Six Council members sought and received ACE funding for innovative proposals (SSIMS and ARC/INFO). Other members organized and conducted successful computing workshops in SPSS-PC+, LISREL, computer mapping, microcomputer statistical packages, and ARC/INFO. The year was marred only by news of Bruce Haston's nearly-tragic accident in Humboldt. He is recovering and plans to continue his participation on the Council.

The Council held three business meetings: Oct 8 at SWRL; February 11 at San Luis Obispo, and April 29 at Cal State LA, following the Student Research Conference. These meetings were well-attended (11, 16, and 12 DR's, respectively) and accompanied by informative workshops on MAIL/BIUNET, CATI software packages, SPSS-PC+, STATA, and MacIntosh HyperCard and MacProject. The care and feeding of participants lived up to high SSRIC expectations. [Thank you CCR staff, Dick Shaffer, and Ted Anagnoson!]

Future SSRIC meetings are scheduled for:

October 13-14 at Cal State Sacramento
February 16-17 at San Diego State
May 4-5 at San Francisco State [May 4 is the
Student Research Conference].

SSRIC's new Chair is Gene Turner, Cal State Northridge.

II. POLICY ISSUES: At its Winter meeting in SLO, the SSRIC discussed important issues raised by the Academic Computing Planning Committee's "Academic Mainframe Computer Replacement Planning Report." Worries were expressed that the proposed decentralization of mainframe computer replacement decision-making might lead to (1) intercampus mainframe incompatibilities obstructing efficient communications and file transfers, (2) the collapse of norms and standards protecting social science

computing needs and interests, especially on smaller campuses, and [3] the loss or downgrading of centralized technical support of applications [particularly SPSS and SPSS-X] and data archive subscriptions [e.g., ICPSR, Field Polls] most heavily used by CSU social science faculty. The Council directed the Chair to communicate these concerns in a memo to Thomas West, Assistant Vice Chancellor, along with the recommendations that [1] standards be centrally established to insure minimal intercampus compatibility for communications and file transfers; [2] all campus mainframes have access to the MAIL/BITNET system; [3] current levels of central technical support of heavily used application programs and data archives be maintained; [4] special attention be given to the computing needs of smaller campuses; [5] systemwide procedures be established to insure due process and broad consultation in mainframe decision-making affecting CSU campuses. This memo was sent on March 11, 1988, and OR's were encouraged to forward copies to local campus computing staffs.

At different meetings the Council discussed policy issues raised by initiatives on many campuses to establish social science research centers and to install CATI systems in some computer laboratories. The sense of these meetings was that SSRIC applauds these developments and would encourage any appropriate central technical support and facilitation of these campus efforts, particularly in the case of CATI.

III. FIELD COMMITTEE: Ed Nelson, Bruce Haston, and Richard Serpe were selected to serve on the Field Committee. Application deadlines were set for the internship program [early December for Spring, mid-April for Fall], faculty fellowships [January-early February deadline], and question credit proposals [mid-January deadline]. Student interns selected were Kevin Nash [Spring] and John Kiesler [Summer]. The policy will continue to be one intern per semester. Two applications were received for the faculty fellowship; Allen Fisher was selected. Out of three applications, Elliott Barkan's question credit proposal was selected and approved by Field. This exhausted SSRIC's question credits for 1987-88. There were two proposals for question credits in 1988-89, with 3 of the 12 credits awarded to Robert Winslow of San Diego State, pending some modifications of text.

IV. ICPSR: Ed Nelson, SSRIC's workhorse and all-around good guy, continued as the ICPSR liaison. A total of \$2100 was available to support SSRIC members attending ICPSR's summer program. The Council approved a policy of financial support in proportion to the number of sessions attended. This year's attendees included Dick Shaffer, Bruce Haston, Paul Strand, Charlotte Leonard, and Ed Nelson. The order of priority for selecting SSRIC delegates to the ICPSR OR meetings was established and reported in the Fall 1987 SSRIC minutes.

V. STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE: The 13th Annual Student Research Conference was hosted by CSULA on April 28. Thirty social science students representing eleven CSU campuses presented a variety of interesting papers at well-attended panels. Richard Milward of

SDSU received the Charles McCall Award for the best undergraduate paper. Sharon Gallagher of CSU Hayward won the Betty Nesvold Award for best graduate paper. And Ines M. Miyares of CSU Stanislaus won the Gloria Rummels Award for the best empirical work using Central CYBER data bases. [Details are given in Gene Turner's "Bytes from SSRIC," ASCINFO, 88-03.] Dr. Eric Schockman, Director of the Pat Brown Institute of Public Affairs delivered the conference keynote speech.

VI. CENTRAL SUPPORT: CCR's staff continued to provide the highest-quality data base management and technical support. Many new data bases were installed and debugged, codebooks furnished, and services provided. These included the 1980-87 GSS cumulative file, the 1987 GSS on floppies for microcomputers, monthly installments of new Field Polls, and many more. New software packages and upgrades (including versions 2.0 of SPCC-PC+ and Systat) were provided, and improvements were announced in the MAIL/BITNET system. Special efforts were made to facilitate formation of a CAII-user network and to establish links with ICPSR's NSF national network permitting direct tielines to data archives. Penny Crane announced that the 1988-89 budget allowed for purchase of 500 computer workstations, these to be allocated to campuses by formula, but funds were chopped for a super minicomputer and certain proposed software acquisitions. Proposals were solicited to compete for \$400,000 worth of ACE grants and \$144,000 support for faculty workshops. Already funded were proposals from Northridge and San Francisco State to develop the ARC/INFO software for geographical information systems (GIS) and from San Diego State for an SPSS-PC+ workshop. This is only a partial list of many CCR activities and services benefitting CSU faculty and students. Hats off again to Penny Crane, Jeff Johnson, Jonah Mills, Pat Curtis and other CCR staff.

VII. OTHER SSRIC ACTIVITIES: Five SSRIC members (Elliott Barkan, Ed Nelson, Bruce Haston, Jim Ross, Richard DeLeon) have nearly completed their ACE-funded work in developing a set of Social Science Instructional Modules (SSIMS) designed to integrate social science concepts and content with quantitative data analysis skills. SSRIC members and other CSU faculty participated in evaluating the modules and testing them in the classroom. Three are written, tested, and ready for distribution: Ed and Elizabeth Nelson's "The Status and Roles of American Women," Elliott Barkan's "California's New Americans," and Rich DeLeon's "AIDS, Homophobia, and Political Tolerance: Public Opinion in California." The data sets for each are formatted to run on both mainframes and microcomputers. Bruce Haston's module on "Opinions and Behavioral Characteristics of College Students" (a compilation of five student surveys on CSU campuses) and Jim Ross's module on patterns of crime in California are nearly finished and will be available soon. The SSIMS project was directed by Elliott Barkan, with valuable assistance from Jeff Johnson at CCR and Kerri McDougall and Jim Ross at CSU Bakersfield.

Gene Turner of Northridge and Jerry Davis of San Francisco State received ACE funding for a proposal to develop training programs and applications in ARC/INFO GIS software. Participation from other CSU campuses is invited, and workshops on ARC/INFO have been scheduled in northern and southern California.

A number of successful workshops were organized by SSRIC faculty, including ones on SPSS-PC+ (Dick Shaffer), LISREL (Richard Serpe), computer mapping (Gene Turner), microcomputer statistical packages (Ted Anagnason), and instructional computing (Dick Shaffer).

In sum, this was an active and productive year for SSRIC. I enjoyed serving as Chair and appreciated all the good help I received from my Council colleagues and CCR staff. The next year should be even more interesting and possibly better.


Rich DeLeon

San Francisco State
October 11, 1988