

The California State University

Social Sciences Research
and Instructional Council

Annual Report

26

1997 - 1998

Summary

The past year was an important year for the SSRIC, highlighted by a commitment from the Chancellor's Office to continue to centrally fund the data base subscriptions of the Social Sciences Database Archive (SSDBA) and by the completion of seven, web-based instructional modules. In addition, the SSDBA made considerable progress in developing a web-based, more user-friendly system for accessing their data holdings. Ongoing programs continued to move along smoothly such as the acquisition of new social science data bases by the SSDBA, the selection of interns and faculty for the Field Institute, and the selection of questions for our question credits in the California Field Poll. The year concluded with a successful spring student conference at California State University Northridge and with a series of four faculty workshops on accessing the new data modules.

Purpose

The Social Sciences Research and Instructional Council is the oldest of the faculty disciplinary councils. It was formed by a concerned group of CSU social science faculty who recognized the changes being brought about by computers and digital forms of data and who saw the need to support continued faculty education in the use of computing in research and instruction. The objectives of the SSRIC are to:

encourage the use of quantitative methods in teaching social sciences

support and implement the collection and distribution of social science data and computer-aided instructional materials

support and implement the use of computerized projects in the CSU curriculum

support and implement the quantitative skills of students and faculty in the CSU

The Council is composed of one member from each CSU campus and meets three times per academic year. These meetings consist of a business meeting and a hands-on workshop to brief members on new software, data, and other relevant computing developments. In the past year, meetings were held:

Oct. 9 - 10	CSU Fresno	hosted by Ed Nelson
Feb. 5 - 6	CSU San Marcos	hosted by Richard Serpe
May 7 - 8	CSU Northridge	hosted by Eugene Turner

Centralized Support for Databases

In 1997 the Chancellor's Office questioned whether it should continue to pay for databases or interested campuses should pay for them. Also, it argued that some other interest groups may wish support for data bases, but because they have not historically had support from the Chancellor's Office, they can not now obtain it.

The current situation is a vestige of a time when the Chancellor's Office provided centralized academic support. At that time, however, there was a wish for more autonomy by individual campuses, and so centralized academic support was terminated in the early 1990s and fund savings were distributed among the campuses. Support for some social science and business data bases was continued centrally.

During 1997 a subcommittee of the Committee on Learning Resources and Instructional Technology (CLRIT) was mandated to evaluate the need for continued support of these data bases. The SSRIC and the SSDBA both collected information on the amount and importance of use of the social sciences data sets.

In September and October, 1997, Eugene Turner, CSUN, prepared and conducted a web-based survey of faculty. The results of this survey were presented to a meeting with the CLRIT subcommittee in November, 1997. Of 102 survey respondents, 59 percent said the databases were very essential or absolutely essential to their instruction and 67 percent found the data so for their research. Nearly 4000 undergraduates and 730 graduate students had received instruction based on these data within the last year. Within the last three years, 15 respondents had used the data to produce books, 29 produced journal articles, 50 created presentations for conferences, and 51 created working papers from these data.

At the November meeting with the Subcommittee, Ed Nelson, Eugene Turner, and Colin Campbell (SSDBA) spoke with William Aguilar, Barry Pasternak, Harold Goldwhite, and Floyd LeCureux. Representatives from the Business Instructional Computing Council also attended. It was pointed out that in addition to the research and instructional value of the data, that costs would rise significantly if individual campuses paid for access. Currently some organizations treat the CSU as a single entity rather than a collection of 21 campuses. For example, the current costs of social science data would increase from nearly \$130,000 per year to nearly \$260,000 per year.

In early 1998 the Subcommittee eventually recommended favorably to continued central support for the data bases. Several alternative actions were suggested to CLRIT - continuing as now, a modest level of increased support, and full support to current and new data base collections. CLRIT still has not committed to a decision, but has referred the issue back to the subcommittee.

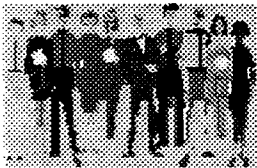
Academic Opportunity Fund Grant

In early 1998, the SSRIC received a \$25,000 grant to develop a series of 25 instructional data sets on various topics in the social sciences. The grant was developed and supervised by Ed Nelson (Fresno). These data sets would accompany 6 modules and related exercises. All materials would be placed on a web site for easy access and downloading. During the following months Nan Chico (Hayward) and Jim Ross (Bakersfield) developed web guidelines and adapted all the materials for web access.

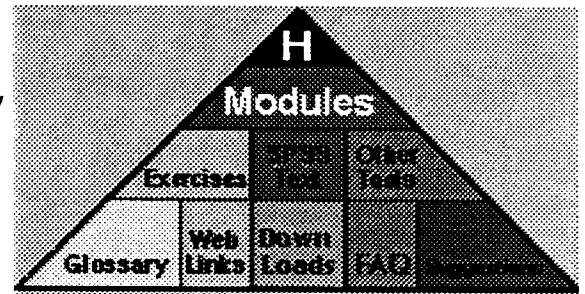
This site is: <http://www.csubak.edu/ssric/>

Four faculty training workshops were held in May and June of 1998. Participants were shown the structure of the web site and given the opportunity to try some of the modules. Four module developers provided instruction at each of the sites.

May 22	San Diego
May 27	Fresno
June 17	Pomona
June 26	Hayward



Social Sciences Research and Instructional Council Teaching Resources Depository Home Page



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About the Site

Authors, Proposal, Accessibility, FAQs, Workshops and Listserv, Site Map, and Copyright.

Teaching Modules

For use in social science research methods or substantive courses. Conceptual and substantive chapters, plus downloadable codebooks, data sets and exercises using SPSS or other statistical software packages.

SPSS Text

On-line version of *SPSS for Windows 7.5: A Basic Tutorial*, by Richard Shaffer, Edward E. Nelson, Nan Chico, John L. Korey, Elizabeth Ness Nelson, and James Ross; 1998, McGraw-Hill.

Downloads

Modules, exercises, data sets, codebooks, and the SPSS Text in various formats: Word 6, PDF, SPSS portable, STATA. Zipped/stuffed self-extracting files.

Glossary

Statistical terms. SPSS terms, with links to Modules and Exercises.

Exercises

Stand-alone exercises with accompanying codebooks and data sets, for use in introductory, substantive, or research methods courses in the social sciences using SPSS or other statistical software.

Links

Social Science teaching and research sites on the WWW: submission form for workshop participants to add their favorite sites.

Other Teaching Materials

Web exercises, Research paper guide, contributions from workshop participants.

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During the spring of 1998 several members prepared data and modules for the web project. These were:

1. CENS: U.S. Census

Exploring the U.S. Census, by Eugene Turner,
Department of Geography, California State University, Northridge.

Six data sets have been extracted and made available as SPSS portable files. Most of the data were extracted from Summary Tape Files from the Census Bureau, but some data are from the 1994 County-City Databook and the California Department of Finance. Data at the census tract level are provided in two data sets for the cities of Glendale and Burbank, California. These two cities were chosen because they are adjacent and had relatively stable tract boundaries between 1980 and 1990. One file provides ethnic data for 1980 and 1990 and the other provides detailed age data for males and females. A third file contains mostly ethnic data and some household data for all cities over 10,000 persons in the United States. A fourth file contains a wide range of data for all counties in the United States. The fifth file was derived from California Department of Finance statistics on population change for all California counties.

2. CJQL: Criminal Justice and the Quality of Life

Crime and the Quality of Life in California,
by James L. Ross, Department of Sociology,
California State University, Bakersfield

In Progress --

3. COWI: California Opinions on the Status of Women

California Opinions on Women's Issues -- 1985-1995,
by Elizabeth N. Nelson and Edward E. Nelson,
Department of Sociology, California State University, Fresno.

Chapters include: An Historical Overview of Women in American Society; Public Opinion on Women's Issues ; Survey Research Design and Quantitative Methods of Analysis for Cross-sectional Data; Introducing a Control Variable (Multivariate Analysis); Exercises Using Data from 1995 Field Poll on Women's Issues; Research Design and Methods of Analysis for Change Over Time; Exercises for Change Over Time

4. MACR: Macroeconomics

Exploring the Macroeconomy:
by James Gerber, Department of Economics, San Diego State University.

Topics covered include: The problem of times series data, SPSS versus a spreadsheet, An overview of the macroeconomy, Schools of thought, Summary measures of GDP and its components, Summary measures of the labor force and unemployment, Inflation and the distinction between real and nominal values, Money and interest rates, Federal finances, Testing hypotheses with t-statistics, Correlation, Regression, The consumption function, Okun's Law, The Phillips curve, then and now, Measuring the growth slowdown with simple regression, A compound growth formula, Possible explanations for the growth slowdown, and an economics glossary.

5. REPR: Representation in California's State Legislature

Representation in California's State Legislature

by John L. Korey, Department of Political Science,
California State Polytechnic University Pomona
and JeDon Emenhiser, Department of Government and Politics,
Humboldt State University.

This module offers you ways to learn more about the theory and practice of popular government. It focuses upon political representation and legislative behavior and allows you to compare representative policymaking in the California state legislature with the making of policy through the direct democratic device of the initiative process. It utilizes demographic data from the U.S. census, from election returns for the state legislature, from rollcall votes in the legislature, and from votes for and against popular initiatives. The focus on Analyzing Legislative Behavior includes Party Behavior, Interest Groups, Region or Area, Policy Issues, District Ideology, District Partisanship, Election Outcomes, Member Characteristics, and Member Voting Behavior. There is also an extensive discussion of statistical procedures.

6. SCCS: The Standard Cross-Cultural Sample

The Standard Cross-Cultural Sample

by Philip Silverman,
Department of Anthropology, California State University, Bakersfield.

The comparative method has been one of the hallmarks of anthropology since its inception in the middle of the 19th Century. Although at various times it was neglected as researchers focused on the less daunting task of understanding a single cultural system, it remains one of the most distinctive contributions that can be made by a science whose data base attempts to account for all cultural systems both temporally and spatially throughout the world. But the efforts of comparativists have been fraught with controversy and methodological barriers that can defeat the faint-hearted. Examination of the data made available here will provide students with an opportunity to evaluate the usefulness of testing hypotheses globally within the framework of pre-coded variables from a systematic sample of the known cultures in the world.

7. SISS: Public Opinion on Social Issues

Public Opinion on Social Issues, 1975-1996

by Elizabeth N. Nelson and Edward E. Nelson,
Department of Sociology, California State University, Fresno.

Chapters include: Perspectives on Social Issues; Survey Research Design and Quantitative Methods of Analysis for Cross-sectional Data; Introducing a Control Variable (Multivariate Analysis); Exercises Using Data from 1996 General Social Survey; Research Design and Methods of Analysis for Change Over Time; Exercises for Change Over Time

Field Reports

Each year the SSRIC solicits and recommends faculty and students for internships at the Field Institute in San Francisco. It also evaluates proposals from CSU faculty who wish to include some questions in one of the California Field Polls. This year Ed Nelson (Fresno), John Korey (Pomona) filling in for Elliot Barkan (San Bernardino), and Richard Serpe (San Marcos) served on a committee to evaluate submissions.

A student from Bakersfield, Chin Pei Zhang, was selected for the Penny Crane Field Institute Student Internship and she will serve as a summer intern. Wendy Schultz (San Marcos) was selected as a Field Faculty Fellow. She would be working on the topic: Psychological Basis of Environmental Concern. Six Field Poll Question Credits were awarded to Elliot Barkan (San Bernardino) for repeat questions on attitudes toward immigrants.

Last year Ted Lascher (Sacramento) and John Allswang submitted questions on ballot initiatives which were included in Field Survey 9703.

ICPSR Summer Program

This year the SSRIC allocated \$3000 for faculty travel support to the summer workshops held by the Interuniversity Consortium of Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Jon Ebeling (Chico) reported that Ms Vicki Zeitner, an MA in Political Science (Los Angeles) would receive \$1800 to attend several workshops and Ms Roditti, in the Dept. of Social Work (San Francisco), would receive \$1200 to attend a workshop on social network analysis.

Spring Student Conference

Each year the SSRIC sponsors a student conference to give students the opportunity to present before their peers the results of their research in the social sciences. This year the Spring Conference was held on May 7th at California State University Northridge. This conference was hosted by Eugene Turner (Geography)

The School of Social and Behavioral Sciences provided a meeting room and \$1000 for support. Thirteen papers were presented in three sections in front of classes. During a luncheon hosted by the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University Club, Mike Davis, author of *City of Quartz* spoke on parallels between decline in environment and in cities.

At the luncheon, three students were given \$100 awards for their papers.

The Charles McCall Award for the best undergraduate paper:

Chad Vanderford (Northridge)
The Origin and Development of Adorno's Aesthetic Theory

The Betty Nesvold Award for the best graduate paper:

Martine Vallade (Northridge)
The Spatial Distribution of Tuberculosis in Los Angeles County

The Gloria Rummels Award for the best use of SSDBA data

Brian J. Householder (Humboldt)
*Presidential Scandals and Presidential Popularity:
Watergate, Iran-Contra and the Lewinsky Affair*

Next year the student conference will be moved from its usual spring date to February 25th at CSU Sacramento. It was the sense of the SSRIC Council that this time would be less likely to conflict with the growing number of student conferences in May.

Other SSRIC Events

The SSDBA Archive

The SSRIC provides input and guidance to the Social Sciences Database Archive at California State University Los Angeles. The Archive, one of the CSU Specialty Centers, contains numerous social science data sets and negotiates with data providers. Managed by Colin Campbell with technical support from Stuart Wugalter and Jeannie Lum, the SSDBA has begun a monumental effort to develop a web-based access method. This has replaced the old Ingress system which was used since the SSDBA was established. The SSDBA provides training on access to the collection and during the last year held workshops at Chico, Hayward, Long Beach, Northridge, and San Bernardino. Considerable detail on the operations of the SSDBA can be found in their quarterly reports.

ICPSR Bi-annual Meeting

Every two years the Interuniversity Consortium of Political and Social Research holds a meeting for the official representatives of the subscribing universities. At the meeting, representatives are advised of policy changes and may attend a range of workshops on statistical methods and data handling.

Because the CSU is a federation, only five representatives from the campuses are provided with travel support. In the fall of 1997, Jon Ebeling (Chico), Frank Gossette (Long Beach), John Korey (Pomona), Dick Shaffer (San Luis Obispo), and Gene Turner (Northridge) were eligible to attend. Ed Nelson (Fresno), who serves as an elected director for the ICPSR, also attended.

Social Sciences Database Handbook

Ted Lascher (Sacramento) has been developing a step-by-step handbook for novice users accessing SSDBA data. With the assistance of Stuart Wugalter (SSDBA) Ted has incorporated this into existing SSDBA materials.

SIP/CETI

Because of the difficulty in funding the computing and communication infrastructure, the CSU proposed a joint public-private venture to provide for future development. The California Education Technology Initiative (CETI) / Systemwide Internal Partnership (SIP) was a plan to form a for-profit venture to carry out this development. Like many CSU faculty, the SSRIC was concerned about the implications of this agreement especially on such issues as intellectual property rights. Furthermore, with the secretive process used in the development of the plan and the very short period for comment during the Fall of 1997, members were highly suspicious of the whole plan. Fortunately, the proposal was terminated in May of 1998 after considerable discussion within the CSU. However, the need for funding future technology development is still an issue.

Respectively Submitted

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October 1, 1998

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