

The California State University Social Sciences Research and Instructional Council (SSRIC)

The SSRIC is composed of representatives from each of the CSU campuses. Its overall objective is to support faculty, staff, and student research and teaching in all social science disciplines. It does this by:

- working with the CSU Chancellor's Office to ensure continued system-wide access to social science databases;
- developing instructional materials and making them available on the Council's website (www.ssrlic.org);
- initiating and conducting workshops on how to access and use quantitative data from the aforementioned sources;
- supporting faculty research by providing access to the ICPSR Summer Program and the Field Faculty Fellowship program;
- providing a forum for sharing information about using data in research and teaching;
- sponsoring an annual student research conference.

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Student Research Conference

The Conference has been held annually since 1976. A special feature of this year's event was the awarding of prizes from the "SSRIC Faculty Memorial Fund." The fund was created thanks to a generous contribution from Dr. Gene Geisler, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at San Francisco State, and a key founding member of the Council. There were three Best Paper Awards of \$5,000 each, and 47 awards of \$100 each for other paper presentations. In all, 79 presentations (50 based on formal papers, 29 on abstracts only) were made. Sixteen CSU campuses and one community college were represented.

TABLE 1: SRC Presentations by Campus

Campus	Papers	Abstracts Only	Totals
Bakersfield	1	0	1
Channel Islands	1	2	3
Chico	0	1	1
Dominguez Hills	1	13	14
Fresno	3	3	6
Fullerton	9	1	10
Long Beach	9	5	14
Los Angeles	6	1	7

Monterey Bay	1	0	1
Northridge	3	0	3
Pomona	9	0	9
Sacramento	3	0	3
San Bernardino	1	0	1
San Diego	2	1	3
San Francisco	0	1	1
San Marcos	1	0	1
Fullerton College	0	1	1
Totals	50	29	79

A wide variety of disciplines were also represented. (Classification by discipline is somewhat arbitrary, since CSU campuses differ substantially in organization and nomenclature.) Perhaps significant is the large number of presentations from fields, such as psychology, that are less likely than others to submit data to archives such as the ICPSR. It does seem striking that few if any presentations came from any of the subscription data bases, with most presenters doing quantitative research either creating their own datasets or doing work as part of a larger data collection and analysis project at their home campuses.

TABLE 2: SRC Presentations by Discipline

Discipline	Papers	Abstracts Only	Totals
Poli Sci/Int Rel/Public Admin	16	4	20
Psychology	10	5	15
Health Sciences	0	12	12
Sociology	6	3	9
Linguistics/English	6	2	8
History	4	1	5
Economics	2	0	2
Geography	2	0	2
Human Services/Social Work	1	1	2
Philosophy	1	0	1
Anthropology	1	0	1
Archeology	1	0	1
Biology	0	1	1
Totals	50	29	79

Only presentations based on completed papers were eligible for awards. Of these, 31 were submitted by undergraduates, and 28 by graduate students. (The latter included one paper co-authored by a graduate and an undergraduate student.) 35 papers were quantitative, while 24 were qualitative. The following Best Paper Awards were presented:

- The Charles McCall Award for Best Undergraduate Paper: Jennifer Bernard, Economics, CSU Fresno for “An Examination of California’s Realignment Policy and Property Crime Rates”
- The Betty Nesvold Award for Best Graduate Paper: Gokh Alshaif & Noor Qwfan, International Relations, CSU Bakersfield for “Daughters of Sojourners: Yemeni American Females’ Experience in Education”
- The Gloria Rummels Award for Best Paper Using Quantitative Data: Jody Lewis, Public Policy Administration, CSU Sacramento for “Improving Bachelor’s Degree Completion Rates: An Examination of First Year Experience at Sac State”

Effective 2015, the name of the Conference will be changed to the "CSU SSRIC Social Science Student Symposium (S4)." This will be done both to avoid confusion with the similarly named "CSU Student Research Competition" and to indicate specifically that ours is a social science event.

Databases

The CSU subscribes to the following social science data bases:

- the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan. Founded in 1962, the Consortium consists of about 740 member institutions, including, since 1972, the CSU. It houses data from over 8,000 studies;
- the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at the University of Connecticut. Founded in 1947, the Center houses the world’s largest archive of survey data;
- the Field Research Corporation in San Francisco. An independent, nonpartisan public opinion news service, it has operated since 1947, and has issued over 2,500 reports based on its polls of California residents.

The consolidation of membership in these organizations, facilitated by the SSRIC, represents a considerable savings (over \$121,000 or 40%) to faculty and campuses that would otherwise have to subscribe individually. Students, faculty and staff are able to download data, codebooks, and other material directly to their computers as a result of this access.

Instructional Materials and Workshops

The SSRIC makes available instructional material via its website. These include two online textbooks, instructional modules and exercises, and instructional handouts. Continuing this year, SSRIC representatives have been working with Andrew Roderick (SFSU Academic Computing) to continue to update the site, particularly by exploring new ways of delivering workshop content online.

The Council also offers free workshops at any campus where faculty have expressed an interest in learning how to access and analyze quantitative data from ICPSR, Roper, and Field, and using SDA. Workshops are also provided on the use of SPSS for data analysis.

Faculty Research

The Council provides limited support for faculty and graduate students to attend the ICPSR Summer Program. Greg Bohr (San Luis Obispo) serves as liaison with this program. At his recommendation, the Council voted to provide support to two faculty members.

Each year the Field Poll provides SSRIC with the opportunity to award CSU faculty with a fellowship that includes credit for a limited number of items to be included on an upcoming Field poll. Applicants submit RFPs and, on the recommendation of a committee chaired by Ed Nelson (at large), the Council selects a nominee, pending final approval by the Field Research Corporation. For the coming academic year, the fellowship will be shared by Robert Wassmer and Ron Fisher of CSU Sacramento for their research on "Perception of Gasoline Taxes and Driver Cost: Implications for Highway Finance and Investment."

Forums for Sharing Information

The Council met three times in the 2013-2014 academic year. The February 7, 2014 Winter meeting was conducted online using Blackboard/Collaborate. The Fall meeting (hosted at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo on October 4, 2013) and the Spring meeting (at CSU Fullerton on May 9, 2014) were "hybrid" meetings. Those who could do so attended the meetings in person, while others participated online. Three members were in attendance in person at the Fall meeting, while 15 attended via the Internet. 17 members participated at the Winter meeting. At the Spring meeting, six members were there in person, and another 15 attended virtually. (Note: these numbers include two non-voting at-large members, and some campuses had more than one campus representative in attendance.)

Council Governance

2013-14 Chair: John Korey (at large)

2014-15 Chair-elect: Matt Jarvis (Fullerton)

Executive Committee: Rhonda Dugan (Bakersfield), Matt Jarvis (Fullerton), Ed Nelson (at large), Lori Weber (Chico)

Field Fellowship: Ed Nelson (at large)

ICPSR Summer Program Coordinator: Greg Bohr (San Luis Obispo)

Web Liaison: John Korey (at large), Greg Bohr (San Luis Obispo)

Student Research Conference: Steve Stambough (Fullerton)

Submitted by John Korey, June 30, 2014.