ICPSR Council Minutes --- October, 2001

**Council Participants:** Margo Anderson (Chair), Charles Betsey, Diane Geraci, Ann Green, John Korey, Huey Perry, Steven Ruggles, James Sweet, Bo Wandschneider

**Visitors:** Kevin Schurer, Director, UK Data Archive; David Featherman, Director, Institute for Social Research

**ICPSR Staff Participants:** Erik Austin, Dieter Burrell, Chris Dunn, Peter Granda, Myron Gutmann, Hank Heitowit, Michelle Humphres, Peter Joftis, Stacey Kubitz, James McNally, Mary Morris, Bree Scesny, Mary Vardigan, Janet Vavra

Myron Gutmann led off the morning's plenary session with a discussion of options for future directions for ICPSR. He outlined two sets of initiatives - research and instructional. In terms of academic research directions, Gutmann noted that in the 1990s ICPSR had come to be viewed as more of a resource for data and training and less as an organization with a strong research component. He asked that the Council consider whether ICPSR is well-positioned to support research activities that go beyond disseminating data. Regarding instructional materials, he asked whether ICPSR should take leadership in delivering instructional materials to the membership in any fashion.

Proposed Research Initiatives

1. Census Research Data Center (RDC) participation. Gutmann proposed that ICPSR purchase a chair at the MI RDI to facilitate research by individuals at member institutions, of census data that are not available elsewhere because of their confidential nature. The process involves a researcher writing a proposal for data use and then being sworn in as a temporary Census employee in order to access the data. The chair will ultimately cost $40,000 per year after the phase-in period, during which time NSF support is provided. Some of the per annum charge for the RDC seat could be charged back to grants of users, creating additional flexibility in the arrangement. The seat is also envisioned, however, for those with fewer resources at their disposal, like graduate students.

The process of getting a research project approved to use a seat in the RDC can be arduous. ICPSR would probably help in preliminary vetting of the proposals, with some outside help.

As long as demand does not exceed supply, we would be able to open this service widely, but scheduling may be an issue. ICPSR would be obligated to pay its share regardless of use of the seat, so we would need to have an option to back out if the arrangement was not successful. It is hard to predict the long-term future of the RDC project. The financial fate of any of them is precarious; most existing RDCs are operating in the red. Local institutions must support them after the NSF start-up monies are gone.

Whether the RDC would be open to non-Americans is an issue we need to address.

Action item: Approval to participate for FY2003 was requested. (This issue was later discussed in the Archival Development and Policy and Planning committees as well and approval to move ahead was granted.)

1. Funds for targeted graduate student research. Such an initiative, which would encourage graduate students from member institutions to work on their ICPSR-sourced dissertation projects here, would help to create a stronger culture of research at ICPSR than we currently have. The level of excitement about our data and in its applications to various research questions would increase.

Action item: This issue will fall to next year's Council and be a part of the FY2004 budget.

1. Visiting faculty research fellows. This type of program would provide funding for faculty on research leaves to come to ICPSR to work on their research. We could also accept people coming on their own funds. Using this model, NACDA will soon be bringing in a post-doc to use the HRS. Another idea would be to encourage a research fellow to develop instructional modules for ICPSR.

There is reciprocity to this arrangement: researchers will learn from us and we will learn from them. The visiting fellows can be our best ambassadors once they leave.

ICPSR offers unique opportunities to researchers in the archiving/library and information technology fields, and any program we offer should include these disciplines.

Action item: We need some clarification before we publicize this widely and start to recruit people. We need to define the scope of the initiative and develop recruitment materials. There may be foundation support for some visiting faculty. Approval will be requested for FY2004 for one or two visiting scholars.

1. Permanent research staff at ICPSR. This is a longer-term goal. Gutmann asked whether Council thought ICPSR should write grant applications for substantive research at ICPSR. The research could use individual studies or our collection as whole and would have the effect of more people with connection to ICPSR publishing in the literature. This would shape the culture of the organization, bring new strengths, heighten visibility, and help the bottom line.

A more pronounced research focus for ICPSR would make it more like other ISR units in blending into the intellectual landscape of the University of Michigan. The more this happens, the more ICPSR will benefit in the university environment.

We also need to think about the implications of creating a primary research staff at ICPSR in terms of ICPSR's relationship with ISR, the University of Michigan, and other member institutions. ICPSR researchers would most likely have faculty appointments as well.

Action item: Council wants to hear more about this initiative next June.

Proposed Instructional Initiatives

1. Report of the SIMI committee. This was to be discussed in a meeting of the Instructional Materials and Information Subcommittee later.
2. Instructional computing tools. This initiative involves ICPSR's leading an ISR-wide project to create instructional computing tools and delivery systems for our data collections. Gutmann is aware that software development is a high-risk activity, but he believes ICPSR has an obligation to serve up its data resources into instructional settings better than it has. He does not envision selling any software we develop, nor would we develop it alone but in collaboration with other ISR units that produce some of the seminal ISR datasets like PSID, HRS, and NES. He also sees funding opportunities for this kind of activity. We need to take these risks to enable users to better exploit the data at the core of our mission.

We should concentrate on tools that have broad archival uses and applicability, rather than tools for specific datasets. The optimal approach would be to develop packages that work for a variety of DDI-compliant datasets. The key is to develop a system that will permit us to bring new data into it and update it easily.

We should be aware that our user community is heterogeneous: there will not be one set of tools that fulfills all of our users' requirements and needs. It follows from this that testing of the instructional tools should be collaborative, with a diverse set of users.

Gutmann recently attended an NIH conference on data dissemination and learned that many large NIH-funded datasets are not being deposited with ICPSR. To become more visible to data producers, we need to present ourselves better and market our services. We need to invest in value-added products and services that will attract data depositors. Sociometrics has been successful in getting new datasets by making a case for enhanced user support and a better front end.

We must also be mindful of data beyond the purely quantitative. There are many new multi-media multi-dimensional studies going online. Providing access to such collections and preserving them pose challenges for archives.

Action item: Council granted permission to establish a relationship with other ISR units to share costs and leverage staff with a budget for FY2003 to come in March. By March we should know how this initiative fits in with the VDC and other such projects and what external funding is available.

1. Development of degree and certificate programs. This is an initiative to establish a training program in data archiving and digital preservation that goes beyond the training offered in the Summer Program. This could be either a certificate process or a degree program, but the former is probably easier to establish.

Action item: Myron will talk to the U-M School of Information about developing some type of archival training program.

PLANNING AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Council members present: Margo Anderson, Huey Perry, Jim Sweet, Bo Wandschneider

ICPSR staff present: Myron Gutmann, Stacey Kubitz

ISR Purchase of Fleming Building

At the time of the Council meeting, all plans and discussions of ISR's purchasing the Fleming Building had ceased due to President Bollinger's announcement to leave the University. In approximately one month, ICPSR needs to present future space needs to the ISR Policy Committee. ISR Director David Featherman communicated his preference to place ICPSR in the main renovated Perry Building (24,000 square feet - 18,000 square feet for staff plus 6,000 for training facilities, possibly to be utilized by the Summer Program).

Staff reported that the air-handling project took two months longer than the worst-case estimate. Staff also indicated that the Border's building lease is not going to be renewed in October 2002.

Graduate Student and Faculty Research Fellows

The School of Information may be interested in collaborating with ICPSR to fund graduate student or faculty research fellows. Myron Gutmann will present a fully developed proposal and budget for this idea at the March 2002 Council meeting.

Harvard VDC Proposal

The October 19th meeting with the Harvard Virtual Data Center was postponed until December 10th.

Bureau of the Census Research Data Center (RDC) at ISR

The committee was supportive and the Council approved ICPSR's buying a seat in the RDC starting with the fiscal year 2003 budget.

ARCHIVAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Council members present: Charles Betsey, Diane Geraci, Ann Green, Steve Ruggles

ICPSR staff present: Erik Austin, Chris Dunn, Peter Granda, JoAnne McFarland O'Rourke, Mary Vardigan

Bureau of the Census Research Data Center (RDC) at ISR

Under the direction of Matthew Shapiro, an economist at the University of Michigan, the Institute for Social Research will establish a new Census Research Data Center in the summer of 2002. The Committee recommended that ICPSR purchase a "seat" in this new Center through payment of an annual fee to support faculty and graduate students from member institutions to come to Ann Arbor to conduct research on confidential Census microdata files.

The Committee supported involvement in the Center based on a specific time commitment and the ability to terminate this commitment if usage was minimal. The Committee questioned the review process for evaluating research proposals to use the Center and urged that staff develop clear procedures for applicants to follow.

The Committee advocated periodic reporting to the Council about the costs involved in supporting the RDC and the amount of resources expended by staff in this process. A formal review should occur after four years.

Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and Confidentiality of ICPSR Data

With heightened interest in the activity of IRBs and use of social science data throughout the membership, the Committee urged a proactive approach to provide IRBs with information about ICPSR policies and practices on the issue of confidentiality. Suggestions included links on the ICPSR home page to this information, which should all be centered in one location. The Committee also recommended that staff contact IRB officials at all member institutions to inform them about current ICPSR policies and send an announcement to Official Representatives as well. Staff should also prepare a statement that IRBs could pass along to their researchers about data protection and proper use of ICPSR collections.

Report on Recent Proposal Submissions

Staff reported recent submission of several proposals to various federal government agencies including:

* 2000 U.S. CENSUS DATA PROJECTS AT ICPSR: This includes two proposals: 1) a submission to the National Institutes of Health on October 1, 2001, seeking $1,270,750 for the period 08/01/02 through 07/31/07, and a second submission to the National Science Foundation on August 15, 2001, seeking $400,473 for the period 03/01/02 through 02/28/05 to fund the collection and preservation of 2000 Census materials and to develop enhanced products and services to further the research interests of the academic community.
* COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH: The Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) Version 1.1 submitted on August 15, 2001, seeking $120,676 for the period 04/01/02 through 09/30/03 to develop Version 1.1 of the Data Documentation Initiative, which seeks to produce a consensus specification for the metadata that describes the contents of social science data collections and archival holdings.
* FACTORS IN AGING: Development of research resources submitted on October 1, 2001, seeking $3,752,147 for the period 09/01/02 through 10/31/07 to further develop and deliver resources and data services to advance research in the gerontological sciences.

Update on Web Site Developments for Census 2000 and Election 2000

Both of these special topical archives are now accessible publicly through the ICPSR website, and new materials and updated content are added on a regular basis. As an example, sample ballot forms from all 67 Florida counties are now available on the Election 2000 site. The Committee recommended that staff continue to add information and resources to these sites.

Update on Secure Data Enclave Committee

Staff will extend invitations to a group of individuals proposed earlier by Council to sit on a new Data Enclave Committee. This Committee will have the charge of establishing procedures for use of ICPSR's own planned enclave of restricted data collections for non-Census materials. The Archival Development Committee recommended that the Data Enclave Committee handle applications from the membership for use of both the Enclave and RDC. This Committee would provide a first review of applications before they are sent to the RDC. Census Bureau officials will make final judgments on the merits of all applications. One or more Council members might serve on this Committee in order to judge the nature of the demand for use of the RDC but not to evaluate the merits of specific research proposals. The Committee also suggested that staff inform Council about the costs involved in supporting this activity as well.

Report on Workshops Conducted in September by CESSDA

Diane Geraci reported on the September meeting of the Council of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA), which occurred at the UK Data Archive in Essex. CESSDA is in the process of creating a new Integrated Data Catalogue using elements from the Data Documentation Initiative (DDI). They are recommending both mandatory and recommended elements for the new catalog. The Committee expressed its belief that ICPSR should be an integral partner in this new catalog (as it was in the previous version) and should make certain our metadata markup will be compatible with that of CESSDA.

Data Distribution Request

The Committee approved a request from Marija Norusis for use of an ABC News poll in a new edition of her SPSS guide to data analysis for students. The poll would be used in exercises to teach the basics of SPSS to undergraduates.

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

Council members present: John Korey, Paula McClain (via conference call)

ICPSR staff present: Dieter Burrell, Hank Heitowit

Report on Summer Program

Hank Heitowit presented a short overview of the highlights of the 2001 Summer Program. Based upon initial reviews, the Program appears to have been a success. Attendance was the highest in the organization's history: 599 individuals from 193 institutions participated in the Program.

Discussion of IMIS Activities

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of the Instructional Materials and Information Subcommittee (IMIS), in which the following issues were discussed:

* The Committee made suggestions to update the SIMI website.
* Two instructional packages have been received by IMIS and passed on to ICPSR.
* A recommendation was made to simplify the standard ICPSR Data Deposit Form to accommodate instructional materials.
* The Committee recommended that IMIS be formally constituted into a permanent entity at ICPSR. In addition, the Committee recommended that IMIS meet twice a year, once in-person. For this to occur, Council would have to authorize funds to be used for that purpose. There was also discussion about ICPSR staff support for IMIS activities.

Council endorsed the creation, deposit, and distribution of quantitative educational materials as one of the missions of ICPSR. In addition, Council approved the Committee's recommendation that funds be set aside to support these activities in the next ICPSR budget, including meetings of relevant individuals and staff support.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Council Members present: Steve Fienberg (via conference call), Margo Anderson, Charles Betsey, Jim Sweet

ICPSR Staff present: Myron Gutmann, Stacey Kubitz

Fiscal Year 2001 Financial Results

ICPSR ended the year with a $952,261 fund balance. This was more favorable than anticipated due to ICPSR earning more revenue and expending less than anticipated.

Support for Graduate Student and Faculty Research Fellows in Fiscal Year 2003

Support is to be postponed until March 2002 when ICPSR Director Myron Gutmann will present a more fully developed idea.

Fiscal Year 2002 Expenditures for Tracking Database

Gutmann explained that the database would make it possible to manage data flow at ICPSR. He also made it clear that this was at the top of his priority list. The committee recommended authorization to spend up to $100,000 on the tracking database during FY2002 and requested a full proposal and budget for the entire scope of the project to be presented at the March 2003 meeting. Council approved this recommendation.

In general, Gutmann enumerated his priorities for the upcoming year as follows:

1. Tracking database
2. DDI retrofit project
3. Hire a Collection Development Officer
4. Hire a Data Security Officer
5. Hire a Sales/Marketing Officer to build membership and think about new services ICPSR could provide

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Council members present: Ann Green, Steve Ruggles, Paula McClain (via conference call)

ICPSR staff present: Peter Joftis, Mary Vardigan, and Janet Vavra

The Council asked that Instructional Tool Development, per Myron Gutmann's talk and Council approval at the Plenary Session, be added to the agenda.

Instructional Tool Development

In his report to the Council earlier in the day, Gutmann listed the development of instructional computing tools as one of his academic initiative options for the future. This would involve ICPSR leading an ISR-wide initiative to develop instructional computing tools and delivery systems for our data collections. A number of ISR units with large data collections, such as PSID, HRS, and NES, have been interested in developing computational tools that would enhance their ability to deliver data and analysis to inexperienced users. ISR sees this effort as a way to bridge the differences among the various ISR studies.

Under this initiative, a group would be created at ICPSR that would be charged with developing cutting-edge software tools. This would be a cooperative venture with other ISR units and potentially others at the University of Michigan. ICPSR would initially fund this effort and would be charged with both developing the software and exploring external funding opportunities. ICPSR would have to hire staff to do this with seed money coming from member dues. This would be a partnership with ISR. Council agreed to support this effort earlier in the day.

The Committee asked that a report on this activity be on this committee's agenda for the March 2002 meeting. This item will also appear on the Quantitative Research and Training Committee agenda.

New Sun Servers

Staff reported that the two Sun Enterprise 3500 servers were installed. The installations were straightforward, and there were no reliability problems. The result has been more space and speed for users. As reported earlier, these servers were acquired by ICPSR with a matching grant from Sun under their Academic Equipment Grant program, thereby significantly reducing the cost to ICPSR.

ICPSR Direct Progress and Impact

The original Council materials for this meeting included a report on institutions participating in ICPSR Direct as of October 2, 2001. Staff updated the document showing that as of October 23rd there were 107 members participating; this was up from 83 on the October 2nd report.

There was a discussion on how ICPSR can track what an OR orders apart from what is ordered by other individuals on campuses. The Council has interest in separating OR downloads from those of the other users on a campus. It was noted that the manifests that are e-mailed to ORs routinely currently include information regarding the individual users and their departments; however, users can withhold contact information such as e-mail addresses. Council noted that it would be useful to track what individuals are downloading and to determine how best to present this information to ORs apart from what they now get on the manifests.

There was a discussion regarding the increase in e-mail volume experienced by the User Support staff and whether this reflected a temporary spike as the service was settling in, or whether this would be permanent and only increase as more institutions move to ICPSR Direct. Council suggested that ways to redirect this e-mail to ORs be explored. There is concern among ORs that they are being bypassed, and it is important to find ways to keep ORs in the loop.

Staff reported that User Support is currently developing automated means to deal with some of the e-mail traffic, thereby reducing the impact. Staff will continue to monitor these developments and look for ways to streamline the process as more becomes known about volume and patterns.

Council requested a report on the impact of ICPSR Direct on User Support at the March 2002 meeting.

Preservation and Migration Activities

Staff reported that the quest for outside funding for preservation activities was delayed and will resume again for the next funding cycles.

Staff expects to begin migrating data from the archival 3480 cartridges to another medium or media, beginning with fiscal year 2003. The 2003 budgets for Archival Operations and Computer and Network Services will reflect these activities.

The NAPA preservation effort will be augmented by the addition of a staff member to the User Support staff to work on this. Additionally, the Archival Development staff will be focusing some effort on this activity also. User Support and Archival Development have been collaborating on ways to expedite and work out these efforts.

Council asked that the staff continue to develop a formal preservation policy, and that it be on the agenda for the March 2002 meeting.

Paper Documentation Scanning Backlog

Staff reported that the retro scanning of hardcopy codebooks has been progressing at a steady pace. In July, there were over 1,200 documents that needed to be scanned and converted. Since that time, over 250 have been completed. Additional staff were hired to augment the project, and a new scanner was purchased, which has doubled the work output of the original scanner. Staff reported that the few titles with microfiche documentation were also being converted to PDF. It is expected that the scanning project will be completed in 10 months.

External Initiatives

The visit to Harvard regarding the VDC project was postponed until December. Currently a team of Council members and ICPSR staff is scheduled to go to Harvard on December 10th to further evaluate and discuss the project.

Staff reported that there has been some progress on the collaboration with the I2T San Diego Supercomputer Project. Currently there is a subcontract with them under review by counsel on our campus. Staff will keep Council informed about this.

Staff reported that the Council of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA) is converting its Integrated Data Catalog to DDI-compliant form. The ICPSR catalog of holdings has traditionally been part of the CESSDA catalog. ICPSR is also moving toward DDI markup and so we should be able to enter our holdings into their NESSTAR- driven replacement for the IDC. There are some differences between CESSDA markup and ICPSR markup, and it was mentioned that ICPSR should note those differences while working on these materials.

Council asked that the External Initiatives item be an ongoing agenda item for this Committee. Council wants to stay informed about potential and ongoing partnerships and collaborations.

DDI Activities

Staff reported that a joint proposal with Roper to continue funding of DDI activities was submitted to NSF in August. There is nothing further to report about this at this time, but there should be more at the next meeting.

Staff reported that Mike Haarman, who will be serving as the XML technical advisor to the DDI group, has stepped in to replace the DTD developer at Virginia who withdrew from the project.

A revised DDI DTD with additional fields to describe aggregate data is now available on the DDI website.

Staff reported contact from several organizations interested in partnering with ICPSR regarding DDI.

The Committee agreed on the need for more public relations to reach people who are not data archivists. The current DDI-related website is not friendly to the non-archival world. There is need for conceptual documents to better report on what DDI is and what it does.

MEMBERSHIP RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Council members present: Diane Geraci, John Korey, Huey Perry, Bo Wandschneider

ICPSR staff present: Hank Heitowit, Michelle Humphres

CESSDA representative: Kevin Schurer, UK Data Archive

Membership Activity Report

Staff reviewed the membership activity report of July 1, 2001 - September 30, 2001.

Since July 1, 2001, three new members have joined ICPSR: the University of Bocconi (Italian Federation), Nanyang Technological University, and the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research. Four members have rejoined ICPSR: the University of California at San Francisco, Kenyon College, Western Washington University, and Howard University. Two members are in the process of joining ICPSR: the University of Minnesota, Duluth, and Fort Valley State University. Three members will drop membership effective 6/30/2002: Ball State University, Taylor University, and East Stroudsburg University.

Staff concluded that to date, new membership activity is lower than in previous years.

Nominations for Council

Staff presented the Membership Relations Committee with nominees to serve on the next ICPSR Council. These nominees will be presented by ballot to all Official Representatives in December 2001. Ballots will be due back to ICPSR for tabulation by January 1, 2002.

William Darity, Economics University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and Duke University

Ilona Einowski, UC Data Archive University of California, Berkeley

Frank Gilliam, Political Science University of California, Los Angeles

John Handy, Economics and Business Administration Morehouse College

Kathleen McGraw, Political Science and Psychology Ohio State University

Mark Hayward, Sociology Pennsylvania State University

Committee to Address the Current ICPSR Membership Structure

The Membership Relations Committee discussed the composition of a committee to review the current ICPSR membership structure and recommend a new membership model for ICPSR to follow. The specific duties of this committee will be written by the Council Chair and the ICPSR Director.

The Membership Relations Committee focused their efforts on identifying constituencies to serve on the committee. The members of this committee will be announced when the ICPSR Council Chair has contacted individuals, and they have agreed to serve. The following constituencies were identified and turned over to the Council Chair:

* Council members
* Federation members
* National members
* Historically Black Colleges and Universities
* Community colleges
* ICPSR staff
* Representation from ICPSR membership categories A and B

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Council members present: Margo Anderson, Charles Betsey, Diane Geraci, Ann Green, John Korey, Huey Perry, Steven Ruggles, James Sweet, Bo Wandschneider

Visitor: Kevin Schurer, Director, UK Data Archive

ICPSR staff present: Erik Austin, Dieter Burrell, Chris Dunn, Peter Granda, Myron Gutmann, Hank Heitowit, Michelle Humphres, Peter Joftis, Stacey Kubitz, James McNally, Mary Morris, Bree Scesny, Mary Vardigan, Janet Vavra

Myron Gutmann reported that in his short term as Director, he has focused his efforts primarily in six areas. They include learning about the organizational structure and individual staff responsibilities at ICPSR; understanding and strengthening ICPSR's relationship with ISR and the University of Michigan; addressing management issues such as building facilities and office space; budgeting and planning; overseeing grants and contracts submissions; and resolving personnel issues.

New activities that Gutmann proposes for the next six to nine months include planning, developing, and implementing a database that tracks studies from acquisition to release; planning and designing a pilot project to retrofit all ICPSR documentation to make them DDI compliant; and developing three new job descriptions. With respect to the latter, Gutmann outlined areas in which increased attention would benefit the organization. The first pertains to data security. Issues such as disclosure, disclosure analysis, confidentiality, privacy, certification of ICPSR data, etc., are increasingly highlighted in today's environment, and our policies and practices need to be current. Second, Gutmann envisions a more proactive approach in the area of acquisitions and suggests a collections development position. ICPSR needs to keep abreast of ongoing research activities and be in contact with researchers to assure that their data are deposited with us. Finally, Gutmann wants to develop a marketing position, focusing on new initiatives to serve our current members and to recruit new users of ICPSR data.