ICPSR Council Minutes
October 5, 2011

Attendees

Council Members: Ann Wolpert (Chair), Francine Berman, G. Sayeed Choudhury, Catherine A. Fitch, Jeffrey Moon, Gregory N. Price, Thomas LaVeist, Barbara Schneider, Rogelio Saenz, Lori M. Weber, Christopher Zorn

ICPSR Staff: JD Alford, George Alter, Rita Bantom, Bryan Beecher, Dieter Burrell, Linda Detterman, Peter Granda, Lynette Hoelter, William Jacoby, Mary McEniry, James McNally, John Marcotte, Kaye Marz, JoAnne McFarland O'Rourke, Dan Meisler, Michelle Overholser, Amy Pienta, David Thomas, Mary Vardigan, Diane Winter

Visitors: Hans-Jørgen Marker, Director, Swedish National Data Service and President, CESSDA; Kevin Schürer, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise, University of Leicester; Lynn Woolfrey, Manager, DataFirst, University of Cape Town; Matthew Woollard, Director, United Kingdom Data Archive; Brian Kleiner, Head of Data and Research Information Services, Swiss Foundation for Research in the Social Sciences

Director's Report

George Alter introduced the visitors as well as new ICPSR staff members Mary McEniry, Director of the Data Sharing for Demographic Research (DSDR) project, and John Marcotte, Director of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Data Archive (SAMHDA).

Alter pointed out that this Council meeting would lead right into the Biennial Meeting of Official Representatives (ORs), which was to begin the following day. Over 100 ORs were in Ann Arbor for the meeting, some of them already taking workshops at the Michigan Union.

Alter indicated that ICPSR membership had reached 708 and had hovered there for about a year – the organization had passed the threshold of 700 definitively. ICPSR added 16 members in FY 2011 and 14 this fiscal year. Membership continues to be strong.

In the last fiscal year, more than 400,000 visitors accessed the ICPSR Web site, staying on the site a relatively long time -- approximately five minutes per visit. The majority of the visits were from the United States, but Canada and China were frequent visitors.

Alter updated the Council on the FY 2012 budget. While the June 2011 budget report to the Council predicted a $743,000 deficit as of the end of August 2011, that projected deficit was reduced to about $200,000. Drivers for this new forecast were known changes in staffing, an increase in membership revenue, increased income from investments, and very conservative budgeting.

Alter showcased the most popular studies released in the previous six months as of September 2011. The top three were General Social Survey, 1972-2010 [Cumulative File]; Uniform Crime Reporting Program Data [United States]: County-Level Detailed Arrest and Offense Data, 2008; and National Crime Victimization Survey, 2009, all of which were all downloaded over 100 times since release.

The top three data downloads in the previous six months (regardless of release date) as of September 2011 were the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), 1994-2008 – 1204 downloads; National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2009 – 555 downloads; and the Chinese Household Income Project, 2002 – 383 downloads.

In terms of proposal submissions, Alter indicated that staff at ICPSR had been very productive since the last Council meeting. ICPSR was a subcontractor to Harvard University on a proposal to the Sloan Foundation entitled "Helping Journals to Upgrade Data Publications for Reusable Research." Alter also highlighted "Sustaining Populations and Landscapes at Risk: Adaptation in the American Grassland Center," a proposal to the NIH that, if funded, will continue the research on the Great Plains that Myron Gutmann, Susan Leonard, and Ken Sylvester have been working on. Alter was optimistic that this project would be funded.

Alter reported that the General Archive had made the transition to the new online system for managing restricted-use data contracts for researchers interested in accessing confidential data. ICPSR is now distributing an important restricted-use dataset from the Department of Housing and Urban Development called Moving to Opportunity (MTO) for Fair Housing Demonstration: Interim Impacts Evaluation, Tier 1 Restricted Access Data, 1994-2001 [United States].

The 2011 Summer Program enrollment hit a record high of 890, a big jump from the previous summer. Students represented many different institutions from all over the world, including Renmin University in China, which sent 30 students. The Summer Program added some new four-week courses and new short courses, all of which had high enrollments, and held courses in four locations outside of Ann Arbor: Berkeley, CA; Chapel Hill, NC; Bloomington, IN; and Amherst, MA. The Program is continuing to spread geographically and welcomed some new partnerships this past summer, including the NSF-supported Program on Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM) and a new "Bridges to the Doctorate" program with the University of Michigan's School of Social Work. New scholarships were provided in education, child development/family psychology, and public administration/public policy and the EITM program also awarded five scholarships. The Summer Program is continuing to partner with the Emerging Scholars Interdisciplinary Network and has an advisory role for the Public Administration and Political Science Summer Program at Shanghai University of Finance and Education.

At the June 2011 Council meeting the ICPSR Undergraduate Summer Interns were introduced. Since that time, John Garcia and Lynette Hoelter have been awarded an NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) grant, which will allow ICPSR to expand the number of interns in 2012.

In the Web area, Alter noted the newly launched ICPSR 50th Anniversary Web site and the 2011 Annual Report. Other sites that recently launched were the Data Archive-Institutional Repository Partnership Project and the Online Portal for Social Science Education in Methodology (OPOSSEM).

In the IT area, Alter emphasized Bryan Beecher's leadership in using cloud technologies across the Michigan campus and beyond. ICPSR has been working with the DuraSpace group, which is developing cloud technologies for digital preservation, and is now starting to use the DuraCloud system to store a copy of the encrypted archival holdings. This past summer ICPSR launched a test instance of the Virtual Data Enclave, which makes it possible for researchers to analyze confidential data on ICPSR systems. Internally, ICPSR uses virtual desktop technology for security, which enables ICPSR data processors and managers to work with data in a secure data processing environment. This system is continually being enhanced with new tools.

Alter also reported on an important new project for ICPSR: an internal system for managing data at the file level which is called "File Level Archive Management Engine (FLAME)." The "data pipeline" process that ICPSR uses now is based on managing studies, not files, and is out of date. As the organization moves to archiving and disseminating new kinds of content, like video and GIS, it needs a more flexible system. FLAME will make data handling at ICPSR more robust and the data processors' jobs easier.

Alter gave an update on the Instructional Resources and Development group, which is led by Lynette Hoelter. Lynette pioneered the ICPSR Online Learning Center, which provides data-driven learning guides for undergraduate education. She has also been working on two other projects: TeachingWithData.org, a repository of materials for teaching quantitative literacy, and another NSF-funded project investigating how instructors use quantitative literacy materials like the OLC and evaluating them. Lynette and partners at Carleton College and the Social Science Data Analysis Network (SSDAN) in the Population Studies Center at the UM Institute for Social Research have put together a survey on how instructors use online resources in the social sciences with a particular emphasis on how they relate quantitative literacy to teaching goals. Over 1000 responses have been received, and they come from four different kinds of institutions: community colleges, four-year liberal arts institutions, and masters-granting and doctoral-granting institutions. A consistent finding is that students who are attending community colleges are getting fewer classes in quantitative literacy. It is not unexpected, but the numbers really highlight this finding.

George reviewed the schedule for the OR meeting as well as the upcoming events for the 50th anniversary celebration.

Budget and Policy Committee

Council: Ann Wolpert (Chair), Catherine A. Fitch, Thomas LaVeist, Gregory N. Price,
                  Barbara Schneider, Christopher Zorn
Staff: JD Alford, George Alter, Rita Bantom, Diane Winter

I.   Strategic Plan

The committee started with a brief discussion about FLAME and its possible impact on ICPSR's growth. Staff reported that this project will be funded internally with indirect cost revenue.

Next, the committee focused on ICPSR's goals for expanding racial diversity. It was agreed that progress is happening but slowly. The discussion primarily centered on broadening the recruitment pool for ICPSR staff, Council members, and Summer Program instructors to help accelerate growth in this area.

II.   Financial and Administrative Issues

A. FY 2011 Year-End Financial Reports

ICPSR staff walked the Council through the various budget displays and charts found in the Council binder. The organization's year-end surplus of $822K was primarily due to under-budgeting revenue:

- Membership revenue was $3.5 million versus the $3 million forecast
- Investment transaction revenue of $200K was not budgeted

Staff also pointed out that much of the overall increase in volume of the revenue and expenses was due to subcontracts. These are "pass-through" funds that do not impact the organization's bottom line. If removed from year-end results, ICPSR would show a 5% variance from budget in revenue and a 1% variance in expenses.

B. FY 2012 Forecast Reports

Staff reported that the organization's latest financial projection shows a year-end deficit of roughly $200K. Changes from the original budget included removing Associate Director salary expenses for FY 2012 and reflecting the receipt of the full (two years) funding for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project.

Staff also handed out a proposed new projection model display. This display looked at the impact that new, unbudgeted sponsored projects would have on FY 2012 financial results. The display's range started with conservative (original budget - $743K deficit) estimates and progressed to optimistic (three additional sponsored projects - $31K deficit). ICPSR will continue to develop this display for use with future budgets and projections.

C. Personnel Update

Staff reported on the staffing/recruiting displays found in the Council binder. Council again expressed a desire to build a diverse applicant pool for staff recruitment.

The committee also briefly discussed ICPSR's recently implemented Retirement Incentive Opportunity.

III.   Governance Issues

A. China Data Center

As a result of ongoing negotiations, specific information regarding the China Data Center was not included in the Council binder. It is expected that more detailed information will be available at the March Council meeting. During the committee's discussion of the possible implications this project may have on ICPSR, it was decided to establish a committee to frame the principles for evaluating such opportunities.

IV.   Projects

A. Grant / Contract Applications Submitted since June
This information was not discussed during Budget and Policy committee meeting.

B. Grant / Contract Awards Received since June
This information was not discussed during Budget and Policy committee meeting.

Membership and Marketing

Council: Jeffrey Moon (Chair), Catherine A. Fitch, Thomas LaVeist, Gregory N. Price
Staff: Linda Detterman, Dan Meisler, David Thomas
Visitor: Hans-Jørgen Marker

I.   Strategic Plan Progress

Staff updated the committee on efforts to meet Strategic Direction II, "Enhance the value of membership in ICPSR and attract new members by providing high-quality, innovative and responsive services and products." Key accomplishments in this area included campus visits; planning for the 2011 Meeting of Official Representatives; exhibits and 50th anniversary receptions at professional association meetings; communications outreach such as DataBytes, the Bulletin, the Annual Report, and social media efforts; and study utilization statistics.

To address the strategic objective to "Identify opportunities to gather members/potential constituencies to build and broaden the data user community while building ICPSR advocacy," ICPSR has continued to conduct workshops at conferences on instructional resources and has developed Web content to assist members with data management plans. ICPSR is also revising the *Guide to Data Preparation and Archiving* and developing new approaches to secure data services.

II.   Membership Activity and Utilization

Membership continues to grow, with 14 new members in FY 2011. Detterman reported that the number of members has grown to 710 with the addition of the University of Hawaii.

Collection of membership dues was running slightly behind previous years, although for the fiscal year that just ended, membership revenues surpassed the forecasts of $3.1 million by more than $400,000.

Utilization of ICPSR resources ran slightly ahead of last year, with 442,527 unique visitors coming to ICPSR's Web site between July 1, 2010, and June 30, 2011. The average visitor viewed 7.6 pages and spent more than five minutes on the site.

III.   ICPSR Membership Outreach

Linda Detterman reported that staff exhibited and held 50th anniversary receptions at the American Sociological Association meeting in Las Vegas and the American Political Science Association conference in Seattle. Upcoming conferences include the Social Science History Association in Boston, the American Economic Association in Chicago, the Population Association of America in San Francisco, and the International Association for Social Science Information Services and Technology (IASSIST) in Washington, D.C.

In September, ICPSR held campus workshops at Saginaw Valley State University, Eastern Michigan University, University of Toledo, Bowling Green University, and Grand Valley State University.

ICPSR planned to start up its monthly webinar series in October. ICPSR continues to send out regular communications to members including the ICPSR Bulletin and the DataBytes newsletter. ICPSR has 466 followers on Twitter and 488 fans on Facebook.

About 100 ORs and DRs were registered for the 2011 Biennial OR Meeting. Sessions were to be broadcast over the Web for the first time. The meeting would also mark the official beginning of the 50th anniversary celebration, although two receptions at professional conferences had already been held.

Detterman also outlined the 2012 ICPSR Marketing Plan, including sections on new member acquisition, membership outreach, data user and member feedback, OR meeting and 50th anniversary activities, external communications, and expanding ICPSR's reach.

IV. Social Media Strategies

ICPSR plans to increase use of YouTube videos as YouTube and video consumption continue to grow. However, there are no plans to use "check-in" social media such as FourSquare or "micro-social media" such as LinkedIn. There are also no immediate plans to employ paid searches from Google AdWords.

To address an action item from June, Dan Meisler updated the committee on producing short data-driven announcements for social media outlets. The original idea that ICPSR staff would produce findings that could then be distributed through social media has evolved to focus on peer-reviewed journal publications. The committee agreed that using social media to spread news on already published findings using ICPSR data was a better idea than having in-house researchers produce them.

This led to a discussion on the value of social media, and how success in social media could be measured. The consensus was that it is difficult to measure the effect of social media on membership interaction, but it was strongly advisable to continue social media efforts as that is where people are. Plus, relying on printed mail communications is cumbersome, expensive, and increasingly ineffective.

Preservation and Access

Council: Francine Berman (Chair), G. Sayeed Choudhury, Ann Wolpert
Staff: Bryan Beecher, Nancy McGovern, Mary Vardigan, John Marcotte
Visitors: Brian Kleiner, Hans Jørgen Marker, Kevin Schürer, Lynn Woolfrey, Matthew Woollard

I.   Strategic Plan Progress

ICPSR staff provided an overview of leadership activities and areas. In June, staff had provided an analysis of current advocacy areas. At this meeting, the discussion considered where ICPSR might want to be or where it could be in terms of a leadership role. Questions posed for consideration included: When should ICPSR convene, actively participate, or contribute? Are there opportunities not being tapped? Staff suggested that at the next meeting we might present the results of the third piece of the gap analysis by considering what the gaps are between where ICPSR would like to be and where it is and how those gaps might be filled.

Council approved a proposed action item: Report on a conceptualization of leadership in preservation and access for ICPSR and a discussion of the gap analysis of what is needed to get there.

II.   Update on Data Science Course

ICPSR staff reviewed the most current version of the proposal for the development of a data science curriculum to be offered by ICPSR. As a first step, ICPSR would offer a week-long

workshop for data curators in summer 2012. The course might test the effectiveness of reaching out to researchers, research administrators, and possible proposal reviewers using webinars to discuss core topics. These webinars would both provide content for discussion in the week-long course and serve as standalone content after the course. Council acknowledged the progress on the course curriculum, voiced support for the short-term and longer-term objectives, and requested an update in March.

III. Overview of FLAME (Rebooting Data Management @ ICPSR)

ICPSR staff provided an overview of the purpose, scope, and objectives of the File Level Archive Management Engine (FLAME) initiative. The discussion addressed the benefits of the project (consistent, compliant, and efficient processing of data packaged in a way that might be offered to other organizations as a service) and the challenges (changing the very familiar way things are done and allocating resources internally to complete the project). Council was very supportive and enthusiastic about FLAME and requested an update in March.

IV. Update on Data Citation Activities

ICPSR staff provided an update on recent activities to contribute to community-wide activities on data citation, including attending the summer DataCite conference and a meeting on "Developing Data Attribution and Citation Practices and Standards." Council agreed that these are important activities for ICPSR to participate in and encouraged ICPSR to continue these efforts.

Collection Development

Council: Lori Weber (Chair), Francine Berman, G. Sayeed Choudhury, Jeffrey Moon, Rogelio Saenz
Staff: Peter Granda, John Marcotte, Kaye Marz, Mary McEniry, Amy Pienta
Visitors: Hans Jørgen Marker, Kevin Schürer, Lynn Woolfrey, Matthew Woollard

I. Strategic Plan Update

Staff updated the Committee on Strategic Plan activities regarding Direction 1 (Leadership).

In the last few months ICPSR was active in seeking to "monitor, respond to, and participate in standards development." In early September, staff participated in a Survey Question Bank Workshop organized by the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) at NIH. The propose of the workshop was to identify core questions and measures that could be used across a variety of national, state, and local health surveys to increase comparability in future data collection efforts.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse has also requested some additional harmonization work for ICPSR through the topical archive it supports (National Addiction & HIV Data Archive Program [NAHDAP]). A new task is now included in the NAHDAP contract to develop

standards for questions across some of their more important datasets as they embark on future data collection efforts.

With regard to Direction III (Broadened Collections), staff has been in consultation with the National Academies to preserve and disseminate data files that document research doctorate programs at colleges and universities in the United States. National Academies staff who worked on this project are now ready to retire and there is agreement among management that a permanent home for these data and their related documentation must be found.

II.   Introduction of New Archive Directors for SAMHDA and DSDR

ICPSR's new Archive Directors, John Marcotte for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Data Archive (SAMHDA) and Mary McEniry for Data Sharing for Demographic Research (DSDR), were introduced to the Committee. Marcotte described his previous position as Director of Research Data Services at the University of Pennsylvania and some of the statistical consulting work that he had done. McEniry outlined her research interests in Latin America and indicated that she wanted to bring a more international focus to DSDR.

III.   Draft White Paper on Data Management Plans (Action Item from June)

Staff did not prepare a new white paper but did present to the Committee "The Enduring Value of Social Science Research: The Use and Reuse of Primary Research Data," written by Amy M. Pienta, George Alter, and Jared Lyle. This formed the basis of discussion on ongoing activity at ICPSR regarding data management plans.

After presenting two webinars on this subject early in the year, ICPSR's Acquisitions Director Amy Pienta has received at least one request every week for letters of support from researchers submitting proposals to NSF. Since ICPSR is specifically mentioned as a possible preservation archive on the NSF Web site, some researchers believe that they must archive their data here, even if the data are out of scope for ICPSR. Researchers also ask for budget estimates for general archiving tasks. In addition, ICPSR has been approached by other institutions who want to establish their own strategies for dealing with researchers on their campuses concerning data management plans.

While ICPSR has developed some rules for costing out archiving services and procedures for processing data for projects that include costs for ICPSR in their budgets, Committee members recommended that the organization develop a full business model for this work. The importance of developing a model was placed in the context of what might become an increasing administrative burden for the organization as these datasets are prepared for initial deposit. The model should include: the menu of products and services that ICPSR would provide, uniform pricing for each of these components, the specific commitments ICPSR would make about permanent preservation of deposited files, the scope of data that ICPSR would accept, and the relationships that ICPSR would have with institutional repositories.

IV.   Report on HHS Proposed Rules Protecting Human Subjects

Staff reported that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) had begun a revision of its rules for protecting human subjects through proposed changes to the Common Rule and was seeking input from the research community to help guide its decisions. Several organizations, including ICPSR, contributed to the public comment on this topic, which was to end on October 26. The committee recommended that ICPSR share its response with members of the Council before submitting it to HHS. Council members were also encouraged to write letters on their own to HHS since there was general agreement that individual letters were extremely influential in establishing government policy in this area.

V.   Update on Archiving Opportunities and Protocols for Qualitative and Mixed-mode Data

The ICPSR Subcommittee on Qualitative Data produced a number of reports over the last couple of years describing the issues surrounding ingesting and processing qualitative data with the goal of developing a set of procedures to follow. These recommendations also apply to the more common way that ICPSR receives qualitative data: as part of mixed-mode collections that include both qualitative and quantitative components. Kaye Marz, former Archive Manager in the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) and current Archive Manager of the National Addiction & HIV Data Archive Program (NAHDAP), described the recent influx of qualitative data into NACJD, which prompted this archive to focus on the adequacy of its procedures for dealing with this kind of data. So far, processing has been very costly because of the need to read every word in a qualitative variable to identify and resolve any confidentiality issues. This is an important factor when estimating costs for qualitative data projects that might want to archive their data with ICPSR.

Qualitative data are currently released in ASCII, RTF, and PDF formats and most are available only on a restricted-use basis because of a small area geography focus. Going forward, ICPSR plans to add specific descriptive tags to the metadata for qualitative files to facilitate discovery by potential data users.

Staff indicated that ICPSR was ready to move forward with the recommendations of both the Qualitative Data Subcommittee and Qualitative Advisory Board, with one of the key issues under consideration the possible need for special training in this area. It was also noted ICPSR expects to get much more experience with mixed-mode data as work begins on archiving the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Longitudinal Database, a project funded through the Gates Foundation.

Staff will provide the Committee with a list of inquiries from both producers and ICPSR staff concerning mixed-mode data for the March meeting.

Training and Instruction

Council: Christopher Zorn (Chair), Rogelio Saenz, Barbara Schneider, Lori M. Weber
Staff: Dieter Burrell, Lynette Hoelter, William Jacoby, John Marcotte, Mary McEniry
Guests: Brian Kleiner, Matthew Woollard

I.   Report on the 2011 Summer Program

Staff reported on the 2011 Summer Program, including the record-setting enrollment and good financial outcome. Enrollments in both the four-week sessions and the three- to five-day statistical workshops were up. The Committee discussed potential future course offerings in the area of data management and data science. The Committee also discussed the desirability of increasing participation from specific geographic locations, such as China or Mexico. Due to the member vs. non-member fee difference, Summer Program participation by scholars from such locales usually depends on their institutions joining ICPSR, an activity spearheaded by ICPSR's membership leadership.

II.   Summer Program and Diversity

The Committee discussed issues surrounding diversity at the Summer Program. Staff described recent diversity activities, especially in attracting diverse participants. With respect to increasing diversity of instructors, Committee members suggested the creation of a "rolodex" of minority scholars who might be qualified and interested in teaching in the Program.

III.   Summer Program Fees for 2012

Staff recommended that the fee structure for 2012 remain the same as in 2011. After a discussion of the financially healthy outcome of the 2011 Program, the Committee approved the recommendation.

IV.   Undergraduate Internship Program

Staff was pleased to report the awarding of an NSF grant to fund the Undergraduate Internship Program starting in 2012.

V.   On-Line Learning Center

Staff posed a question to the Committee: should the ICPSR catalogue of Data-Driven Learning Guides continue to be restricted to ICPSR members? And if the DDLGs are opened to non-members, upon what criteria should this be done? The Committee discussed the development and future of the DDLGs, including the potential utility of the guides for community colleges. The Committee recommended that the Council create a Working Group to consider the issues of how ICPSR can position its undergraduate teaching resources as a service to community colleges. The Working Group would investigate whether these resources should be opened up to the larger social science community or should be used to enhance ICPSR membership.