

Erik Austin Retires—40 Years of Service to ICPSR

ICPSR said farewell in 2006 to one of our longest serving staff members as Assistant Director Erik Austin retired after 40 years of service. Erik was a guiding force in ICPSR's development, influencing the substantive direction of the archival holdings, and positioning ICPSR to become an integral part of the infrastructure of social science research.

A graduate of Dartmouth College with coursework toward a PhD in history at the University of Michigan, Erik held the position of director of Archival Development for many years and served as acting director of ICPSR in 2000–2001. He was active in the Social Science History Association, serving as executive director of the organization for over a decade. With his mentor Jerome Clubb, he coauthored *Political Facts of the United States Since 1789* (Columbia University Press, 1986).

Drawing on his training in history, Erik created and supervised the preparation of some of the key historical datasets in the ICPSR holdings—datasets upon which the early reputation of the organization was based. Erik was instrumental in securing sponsored funding for innovative projects. Erik's portfolio of grants and contracts includes longstanding support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a contract with the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress, and several successful joint projects with the U.S. Census Bureau that broadened access to Census data and made them easier for researchers to use.

Margo Anderson, ICPSR Council chair during Erik's tenure as acting director, sums up his contribution: "Erik's career spans the coming of age of ICPSR, and cooperative data acquisition and management in the social sciences more generally. He has served as a leader and mentor to a legion of data users, archivists, and administrators. I leaned heavily on his sage advice during my time on Council. He was wonderful to work with, gracious, helpful, and generous with time and his good humor."



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Hank Heitowit Retires After Most Successful Summer Ever

After overseeing ICPSR's largest Summer Program enrollment in its history, Director Hank Heitowit retired from ICPSR at the end of August 2007.

A graduate of Brooklyn College and Syracuse University (MA in public administration) with advanced courses in political science at the University of Michigan, Hank began his tenure at ISR in the Center for Political Studies in 1972 as an assistant study director. He became assistant director of the Summer Program in 1978 and director in 1981. Hank built the Summer Program into a unique resource for training in quantitative methods that is recognized the world over for its excellence.

William Jacoby, longtime instructor in the Program and Hank's successor as director, comments on Hank's impact: "It is no exaggeration to say that Hank's activities had important positive effects on the careers and professional development of thousands of students and faculty, across a wide range of academic disciplines."

During his tenure as director, Hank increased the scope of the topical coverage of the Program and added workshops in locations other than Ann Arbor, further expanding the course offerings and extending the reach of the Program. He worked diligently to increase the demographic diversity of Program students and faculty. In 1992, the University of Michigan Office of the Vice President for Minority Affairs, led by Charles Moody, presented Hank with a special award for activities to promote diversity through the Summer Program.

Perhaps Hank's most noteworthy accomplishment was the steady increase in Summer Program attendance during his tenure. When Hank began as director, the Program offered about 25 courses with a yearly enrollment of under 300 and attracted mainly political science students. By the time Hank retired in 2007, the Program had 50 courses and over 800 participants representing over two dozen disciplines.

Always eager to meet with and counsel students, Hank ensured that the environment for the Summer Program was not only of the highest academic quality but also welcoming and supportive.



Quantitative Methods
Education