**Minutes of the Meeting of February 8-9, 2002 at CSU Fresno**

**Present**: Elliott Barkan (SB), Chair; Ted Anagnoson (LA); Mike Reibel (PO); Don Dixon (SO); Rich Taketa (SJ); Gene Turner (NO); Dick Shaffer (SLO); Kanghu Hsu (DH); Ed Nelson (Fresno); Jim Ross (BA); John Korey (PO); Frank Gossett (LB); Paul O’Brien (Stanislaus). Tony Hernandez attended via a phone connection.

**1.      The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.**

**2.      The agenda was approved as submitted.**

**3.      ICPSR Biennial Meeting in October, 2001.**

A.     Good description of the meeting in the recent ICPSR Bulletin.

B.     ICPSR Direct – Upon the recommendation of John Korey, and after discussion, the Council approved a motion to ask Tony Hernandez to sign up all CSU campuses for ICPSR Direct. This will enable any faculty member, staff or student to obtain data directly from ICPSR without the intervention of the SSDBA; the SSDBA staff will still be available for consultation and assistance with data bases. One question is what the interface will look like for campus users – will they see that they can get help from their local Official Representative or from the SSDBA, or both? Tony agreed to work out the logistics with the ICPSR.

C.     There is a listserv for all interested in teaching research methods – info on joining to come from ICPSR.

D.     An additional representative from a teaching oriented institution and federation member was elected as part of the nominating committee’s slate at the meeting, from Morehouse College in Atlanta.

E.      The Site for Instructional Materials and Information has been (or is being) redesigned at the ICPSR. This site has a national scope, as opposed to the SSRIC’s TRD, which focuses specifically on California.

F.      The Future of Federated Memberships – The ICPSR has not worked out its position as yet. There are 13 federations in North America, with the typical pattern being a PhD institution as hub and a network of smaller non-PhD institutions in the general area linking through the hub institution. We are not typical in that we are a network of MA level comprehensive institutions, and we have a council of faculty who meet three times a year to monitor the membership and provide faculty input. For research PhD institutions, the $ for membership is relatively low; for our campuses, the amount is substantial.

**4.      Update on the Social Science Data Base Archive.**

A.     Report on the status of our interactions with the Council of Library Directors and its Electronic Access to Resources subcommittee. After the Fall meeting, Barkan’s committee did a report (Kudos to Elliott for a good report) and then Ed Nelson and Tony Hernandez went to a Council of Library Directors meeting in December.

B.     Gerry Hanley of Academic Technology Support in the CSU Chancellor’s Office, provided us with copies of his presentation on the CSU Digital Library. This was distributed to all representatives present.

C.     EAR, the subcommittee, has done an evaluation of the SSDBA. With 4 as a high grade, our grade is an average of 2.5, with several criticisms reflecting a perspective that the SSDBA should be a finished and polished site like Lexis/Nexis or other commercial databases. We clearly need improvements for that to be the case. The criticisms are (with comments from the discussion summarized by your note taker):

(1)   The SSDBA and the databases are clearly for faculty and graduate students. [But some/much of our existing usage is with undergraduate classes led by an instructor.]

(2)   The site and the databases are unusable without special training. [But this is also true of articles in the hard sciences or theoretical articles in the social sciences that librarians routinely download for undergraduates.]

(3)   Many of the EAR users found uneven accessibility. [Part of this, Tony said, may be limits on the size of the data line that Cal State LA has to port to the Internet.]

(4)   The home page is not helpful and not easy to use. [This can probably be fixed; we would welcome input from the librarians into a system that would make it easier to use.]

(5)   In most cases, the archive provides raw data; students need to know SPSS to analyze the data. [This is partially true; some of the data could be analyzed with Excel, and SPSS is only one of several statistical packages supported around the system that can be used to analyze the data.]

(6)   Data are not current, not up to date. [This criticism seems misplaced given the nature of the archive and the agreements with data providers and users – this is not the web site of the Washington Post or the New York Times.]

(7)   There is no direct access without a password, and passwords are difficult to generate. The goal is to shift to IP addresses as a means of authentication to eliminate this problem.

(8)   Searching the interface is not easy; the help files are not that helpful. [Tony is shifting to a new search engine; several representatives around the table had had this feeling also at one time or another.]

(9)   No help 24 hours a day; how would support staff be provided? [This is true of many data bases; the goal of librarian assistance for the SSDBA is similar to the goal in other areas and for other database collections – the librarian’s role is to help the user find the data set and codebook necessary and to assist in the download process. Once the data are downloaded to the user’s machine, the librarian’s role is over and the SSRIC representative or faculty member’s role begins. The data in that sense are just like a complex article in a science journal, where we do not expect the librarian to be a subject matter expert on the substance of the article.]

(10)           When requesting help from the SSRIC rep, .... [missed this one]

(11)           Cost to librarians and extent of usage 🡪 seems too little for the money expended. [Gerry Hanley needs to clarify the monetary situation.]

(12)           Much ICPSR data are already free – why should we be members? [While some data sets are free, over 90% of the data are not available without membership. The free data are the Census and some major studies that are supported by NSF and other federal grants, like the American National Election Studies.]

**Other points made:**

        Even with the Census, there are many technicalities that one does not expect the Librarian to know, and they do not know, and yet they are already handling access to Census data without complaint.

        Ease of use – we will be developing more instructions and putting them up on the www page.

        IP authentication – coming.

        Search engine – new one by the end of this FY.

        They clearly expected everything to be in place.

        Tony will be doing FAQ files – how do I unzip a file? read an SPSS file? Stuff like that.

        Tony – will be getting portal software to make interaction among users easier. Bulletin boards, chat, etc.

        Variable names – instructions to open a separate variable name/codebook window along with the analysis window.

        Slowness of response – slow now on all of CSLA campus. Upgrade coming.

        Census Ferret – provides only descriptive information – SSDBA more than descriptive.

        Field – all databases from Field that have been received are up and available. January and May of 2001 are up. Later data from 2001 are not received as yet.

        Links to ICPSR, Field, Roper – have to make it clear as to what we have available.

        Costs – partially misunderstood – Elliott’s reply to clarify. Hanley needs to clarify the financial arrangements.

        The goal of the SSDBA is to make data available for people who want to manipulate data – within the context of modern social science, which is clearly grounded on empirical data – not to give small factoids to people who want a few facts for a report. In this sense the SSDBA is quite different from many other databases Librarians work with.

        Some of the librarians have a kind of community college view – we are strictly an instructional system, not a system where faculty and graduate student research is supported.

        Analogies to UC – how do they do it, through ucdata.ucberkeley.edu.

        Want a year to get this accomplished?

**5.      Field Poll.**

A.     Two proposals were received for the Field Faculty Fellow – the Field committee, consisting of Ed Nelson as chair, Elliott Barkan and John Korey, recommended that the proposal from Susannah O’Keefe of CSU Sacramento on the living wage be supported and that she be advised to revise and resubmit to Mark DiCamillo of Field to develop final wording on a set of questions. This recommendation would be for both the 12 faculty fellow questions and the six question credits.

B.     A second proposal, from Amy Liu of CSU Sacramento – advised to revise and resubmit next year.

C.     Discussion of why there are not more applications.

(1)   General consensus to send the notices to the research directors/deans on all the campuses for input into the campus grant announcement data bases.

D.     No student intern applications were received.

E.      The Council approved the recommendation of the Field Committee.

F.      Field’s schedule:

(1)   February 02 – 1000 registered voters

(2)   May, 02 – 1000 adults

(3)   September, 02 – 1000 registered voters

(4)   October, 02 – 1000 registered voters

(5)   February, 03 – 1000 adults

(6)   May, 03 – 1000 adults

G.     Our preferred date for the Field Research Conference – 5/17 or 6/14 were supported.

H.     A committee consisting of John Korey, Ted Anagnoson, and Mike Reitel will develop our own proposal for questions for next year.

**6.      Student Research Conference – April 26, 2002**

A.     Reminder to have students apply – Papers can be by an individual student, a group of students, or one or more students with a faculty member.

B.     Abstracts due by 4/4.

C.     Papers by 4/15 to be considered for an award.

D.     Speaker is George Vernez, who will talk on “Public Policy Analysis in the Political Process.”

E.      Dinner Fri night is at Papaya Bay, a new Thai restaurant. 30th anniversary dinner.

F.      Old SSRIC members will be invited to the dinner.

**7.      Chair for 2002-2003.**

A.     Richard Shaffer was nominated and elected by acclamation.

**8.      Old Business.**

A.     **SSDBA Funds** – there are no funds controlled by the SSDBA as a whole, but the group that has written several textbooks has contributed the royalties to a fund controlled by that group and sometimes used for SSRIC purposes.

B.     **m/s/p to honor a member of the SSRIC at the 30th anniversary dinner** – committee consisting of Gene Turner, Elliott Barkan, Rich Taketa, and Jim Ross is to develop an appropriate honor.

C.     **The same committee will determine an appropriate role for Charles McCall** at the meeting, including having him present the “Charles McCall Prize” etc.

D.     **Members shared their current research** and other interests.

Meeting adjourned at 3.55 p.m.

Ted Anagnoson  
Los Angeles  
Temporary Scribe  
2/10/02