## SSRIC Logo

**Spring, 2015**

**Newsletter**

### What is the SSRIC?

Founded in 1972, the Social Science Research and Instructional Council is the oldest of the affinity groups in the CSU. The Council is dedicated to assisting social science students and faculty in their learning, teaching, and research. The goals of the Council are to develop and coordinate programs to extend the quantitative skills of faculty and students. Please visit our website at [http://www.ssric.org](http://www.ssric.org/).

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### What’s new in the SSRIC this year?

If you are already familiar with the SSRIC, you will probably want to read this section and skim through the remaining parts of the newsletter and pick out the sections you want to look at. If you’re not familiar with the SSRIC, the other sections will give you valuable information.

So what’s new?

* Take a look at our website ([http://www.ssric.org](http://www.ssric.org/)). There are teaching resources available for critical thinking classes and classes that focus on social issues as well as for other classes.
* We have developed three extended PowerPoints that tell you everything you wanted to know about the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research and the Field Institute. To find these PowerPoints go to <http://ssric.org/participate/workshops> .
* We have also developed four five to ten minute videos that provide a brief introduction to the SSRIC, ICPSR, Roper and Field. To find these videos go to <http://ssric.org/participate/workshops>
* If you would like to schedule a workshop on your campus at no cost to you, pleases contact Ed Nelson at [ednelson@csufresno.edu](mailto:ednelson@csufresno.edu). For more information about workshops, go to <http://www.ssric.org/participate/workshops>.
* Take a look at ICPSR’s website on teaching with data ([Address for Teaching With Data Website](http://teachingwithdata.org/)). The goals are to improve students’ quantitative reasoning and to give students first-hand experience with analyzing and interpreting data. You’ll find exercises and data that you can use to create your own teaching materials. It’s searchable and has lots of useful teaching resources.
* Applications for the Field Faculty Fellow are due on April 15, 2015. It’s a great opportunity to put 12 questions on a Field Poll.
* Our annual CSU SSRIC Social Science Student Symposium (S4) will be in Sacramento on Thursday, May 7. Please encourage your students to think about submitting their papers to our conference.
* If you would like to subscribe to the SSRIC email list, go to the end of this newsletter for more information.

### Website ([http://www.ssric.org](http://www.ssric.org/))

Our website includes information on:

* the social science data bases (Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, Field Institute, Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, General Social Survey)
* how to participate in:
  + the Field Institute’s Faculty Fellowship selection process,
  + our CSU SSRIC Social Science Student Symposium (S4) in the spring,
  + the ICPSR summer program,
  + our workshops and
  + subscribing to our email list
* the Teaching Resources located on our website including modules, exercises, online texts, and links
* the Council, including how to locate your campus’s representative

### Social Science Data Bases

Faculty, staff, and students on campuses that subscribe to the social science data bases have access to several data bases.[[1]](#footnote-1) The SSRIC provides assistance to all CSU faculty, staff, and students in accessing the information in these data bases. (See [http://www.ssric.org](http://www.ssric.org/) under “Data” for more information.)

* The Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan is the closest we have to a national social science data archive in the United States.  It is a consortium of 750 member institutions, which include virtually every major university and college in the United States and Canada and many universities throughout the world.  The ICPSR data holdings serve a broad spectrum of disciplines including political science, sociology, history, economics, geography, demography, gerontology, public health, criminal justice, education, international relations, business, and education.  Currently the ICPSR’s archive includes over 7,625 studies with more than 64,000 data sets including the General Social Survey, the American National Election Studies, U.S. Census data from 1790 to the present, the World Values Survey, Current Population Surveys, the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, U.S. election returns from 1788 to the present, the Monitoring the Future surveys, the National Survey of Black Americans, the National Crime Victimization surveys, the Household Survey on Drug Abuse, and the National Health Interview surveys.  More information about the ICPSR is available on its web site at [http://www.icpsr.org](http://www.icpsr.org/).
* The Field Institute in San Francisco conducts the Field Poll, which is one of the major state polls in California.  Membership in the Field Research Corporation provides access to all current Field Polls and to the archive of past Field Polls, which date back to the 1950’s, and provides the opportunity for CSU faculty to include their research questions in the Field Poll.  The combination of the Field archival holdings and the current Field Polls provides historical data and current information on important social and policy issues in California that are not available through the ICSPR.  More information is available on the Field web site at [http://www.field.com](http://www.field.com/). Field Poll data are provided through an arrangement with UCDATA at the University of California at Berkeley (<http://ucdata.berkeley.edu/data_record.php?recid=3>).
* The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at the University of Connecticut is one of the leading archives of public opinion data and includes a large collection of international data.  It is a vital supplement to ICPSR data, which does not include many state-based public opinion surveys.  The Roper Center’s iPOLL is a searchable data base of over 642,000 survey questions from as far back as 1935. It provides you with the exact wording of the question and information about the survey and frequency distributions for the results. More information is available on the Roper web site at [http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu](http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/).

The consolidation of membership in these three data archives, facilitated by the SSRIC, represents a considerable savings (approximately $131,000) to the CSU over what it would have cost for campuses to join individually. This is a 39`% savings.

### Workshops

The SSRIC offers five workshops:

* Introduction to the social science data bases
* SPSS – introduction
* SPSS – intermediate
* Survey Documentation and Analysis (SDA) – an online statistical package created at UC Berkeley
* Data in the classroom – using the data for teaching

We will come to your campus and present a three-hour workshop. There are no costs to you. We are working with San Francisco State University to develop alternative ways of presenting this information to you. Please contact Ed Nelson ([ednelson@csufresno.edu](mailto:ednelson@csufresno.edu)) if you would like to schedule one of our workshops. See <http://www.ssric.org/participate/workshops> for more information.

### Field Faculty Fellowship Program

The Field Faculty Fellowship program offers CSU faculty the opportunity to place twelve questions on a Field Poll. The faculty member will take part in a research project on a topic approved by Field’s management and will participate with staff in the development of the survey questionnaire. All field work will be provided. The faculty member may also use the data for publications of his or her own. **Proposals are due on April 15, 2015.** See <http://www.ssric.org/participate/field_institute> for more information.

This year the Field Faculty Fellowship was awarded to Robert Wassmer, Department of Public Policy and Administration, CSU Sacramento and Ronald Fisher, Department of Economics, Michigan State University. Their proposal focuses on the perception of gasoline taxes and driver cost and the implications for highway finance and investment. A recent winner of the Field Fellowship, Charles Gossett, used items included in the Field polls for an article (with Gregory Lewis) entitled “Changing Public Opinion on Same-Sex Marriage” (*Politics and Policy*, 2008).

### Student Research Conference

The 40th Annual CSU SSRIC Social Science Student Symposium (S4) will take place at California State University, Sacramento on Thursday, May 7. Undergraduate and graduate students have the opportunity to present their work in a non-threatening environment. For many students, this is their first opportunity to present their work at a professional conference. Although there are three categories of awards (i.e., best undergraduate paper, best graduate paper, best paper using quantitative data), the conference is low key with the intention of offering students an opportunity to present their social science research in a supportive environment.

The SSRIC hosted its 399h annual student research conference at California State University, Fullerton on May 8, 2014. The following students were presented with awards:

* The Charles McCall Award for Best Undergraduate Paper: Jennifer Bernard, Economics, CSU Fresno, *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, *Daughters of Sojourners: Yemeni American Females’ Experience in Education*
* The Gloria Rummels Award for Best Use of Quantitative Data: Jody Lewis, Public Policy Administration, CSU Sacramento, *Improving Bachelor’s Degree Completion Rates: An Examination of First Year Experience at Sac State*

Please encourage your students to present their research at the conference. If they would like to compete for the awards, they should submit their complete paper. If they want to present their research and not compete for the awards, they only need to submit an abstract. Dates for submission will be announced later. Information will be available on our website at <http://www.ssric.org/participate/src>.

We expect in the near future to announce major cash awards for winning presentations at this year's Student Research Conference.  Check your email inbox for more details as they become available.  If you're not already a subscriber to our email list, please sign up now by going to <http://www.ssric.org/mailer/subscribe>.

### Teaching Resources

Instructional materials, including short exercises and longer modules with introductions to many methodological and statistical topics, are available on our website (see [http://www.ssric.org](http://www.ssric.org/) in the “Teaching Resources” section) and can be downloaded by faculty and staff for their use.  In addition, a revised edition of *IBM* *SPSS for Windows:  A Basic Tutorial Version 22* is available on our website (<http://ssric.org/node/459>). There is also an integrated set of teaching resources for research methods in political science available on our website (<http://www.csupomona.edu/%7Ejlkorey/POWERMUTT/index.html>). 

Lori Weber (CSU Chico) developed an instructional module based on Robert Putnam’s book, *Bowling Alone*.  Her module focuses on social capital and civic engagement and provides students with the opportunity to develop skills in quantitative reasoning and data analysis (using SDA – an online statistical package) and is on the ICPSR’s website (<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/instructors/icsc/index.jsp>).

If you would like to submit instructional materials to be placed on our website, please contact John Korey, Cal Poly Pomona ([jlkorey@csupomona.edu](mailto:jlkorey@csupomona.edu)).

### Programs for Statistical Analysis

There are several commonly used statistical packages in the CSU. The SSRIC offers workshops on both SDA and SPSS.

* Survey Documentation and Analysis (SDA). SDA is a software program created at UC Berkeley that allows online data analysis, including frequencies, comparison of means, crosstabulations, comparison of means, correlation and regression, and logistic regression. A new release of SDA is now available. A list of SDA resources can be found on the SSRIC’s website at <http://www.ssric.org/data/sda>.
* Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is the most commonly used statistical package in the CSU. The CSU has a systemwide site license for SPSS which allows faculty and staff (but not students) to have SPSS installed on their computers and in computer labs. There is also an online textbook available on our website which serves as an introduction to SPSS (<http://ssric.org/node/459>).

### Teaching with Data

Teaching with Data is an initiative by ICPSR and the Social Science Data Analysis Network to provide teaching resources to faculty. To take a look at their website, go to [http://TeachingWithData.org](http://teachingwithdata.org/). The goals are to improve students’ quantitative reasoning and to give students first-hand experience with analyzing and interpreting data. You’ll find exercises that you can use in your class and data that you can use to create your own teaching materials. It’s searchable and has lots of useful teaching resources.

### Subscribing to the SSRIC Email List

The SSRIC sends out periodic emails about our Student Research Conference, workshops, the Field Faculty Fellowship program and other teaching and research opportunities. If you would like to subscribe to our email list, please go to <http://www.ssric.org/mailer/subscribe>.

### Contacts

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* Newsletter editor: Ed Nelson, Department of Sociology, [ednelson@csufresno.edu](mailto:ednelson@csufresno.edu), 559-978-9391

1. Each campus has the option of subscribing to the social science data bases. This typically occurs in July and August. For information on subscribing to data bases, please contact Dr. Matt Jarvis ([mjarvis@fullerton.edu](mailto:mjarvis@fullerton.edu), SSRIC chair for 2014-15). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)