

April 6, 2005, corrected on February 28, 2006

Research Data Technology Centre Advisory Council

Minutes from Meeting of 1 April 2005, 9:00-11:00 am

Present: Roderic Beaujot, Vince Gray, Chris Robinson, Moira Stewart, Stewart Thornhill, Joyce Garnett, Marty Cooke, Alison Ariss (for Tedd Hewitt), Bradley Corbett

Regrets: David Bellhouse, Paul Maxim

1. Review of “Centre Status” document dated 13 August 2004, including cover letters by Roderic Beaujot (13 August) and Paul Maxim (5 August) and response from Nils Petersen (7 October) and further support letter from Nils Petersen (31 August).

-Centres are renewed every three years, and thus it is normal that the RDTC is receiving the same time frame.

-This “Centre Status” document is to be placed on our web site, without the budgetary provisions.

-While our official name is the Research Data Technology Centre, we can also call ourselves a Statistics Canada Research Data Centre, or Western’s RDC, or the UWO RDC.

2. Terms of reference for Advisory Council

-The Advisory Council does not have governance or management responsibility but provides advice to the Academic Director and Centre Liaison Officer on behalf of the research community.

-Rather than meeting five times per year as indicated in the Centre Status document, the Advisory Council will meet twice per year, and at other times as decided by straw vote over the e-mail.

-For the two further members of the Advisory Council, we will invite someone from The University of Windsor, and someone from an interested research group based in the community.

-We should seek to put an article in Alumni News regarding the RDTC.

-Moira Stewart is to send examples of terms of reference for advisory councils.

3. Review of the web site: rdc.uwo.ca

-This site serves the function of the public face of the RDC, and a link to various items of interest, including workshops and postings of papers from past workshops. The names of persons on the Advisory Council are to be posted.

-We should add a feature permitting people to register for being on the e-list (Gray, done).

-The following were proposed as means of using the web site as a basis for a “community

of scholars,” that is, a community that seeks to profile its participants, the work being done, and a means of inter-personal exchange and assistance:

- We should use this site to post abstracts, working papers or links to publications.
- If it is permitted, we should list all RDC projects at Western with the investigators, project title and data set(s).
- If it is permitted, we should list the persons on the e-list with their departments and areas of research interest.
- We should post the CFI proposal (minus the budget), permitting access the various parts of the document.
- We will post minutes of the Advisory Council and reports received by the Advisory Council.

4. Review of the e-list of the RDC

- Names were suggested for addition, people may send further names or register for the e-list through the web site.
- As with other e-lists, this list may be used by anyone, the names of the persons on the list are available, but only the owner of the list (Vince Gray, vince@uwo.ca) can add or remove names.

5. Memorandum of Understanding with Statistics Canada and Centre Budget

- The MoU is a Standard Contract between Statistics Canada and the University of Western Ontario, that indicates that Statistics Canada will “provide on-going support to the UWO RDC, including: disclosure avoidance analysis; on-going operation of the RDC; provide the detailed micro-data to be used in research; provide advice and consultation on data and methods; provide daily support to researchers working in the RDC; participate in the research activities of the host institution and its partners; and perform the administration of researchers’ contracts, security checks and other related items.”
- The annual costs of the above is \$100,000, of which half is being paid by Central Administration in the form of a UPIF, and the remainder is covered by the Faculty of Social Science. For 2005 and 2006, part of the Social Science portion is covered by an operating budget (IOF) from CFI.
- In the first years, until there is need to renew hardware and software, there will not be large additional costs, but these are covered by FSS through the SSCL.
- The Development Office is seeking to cover additional infrastructure costs, including that portion that was not covered in the CFI/OIF grant.
- The National Coordinating Committee of RDCs is seeking ongoing operating funding on the basis of an application that has been made to SSHRC/CIHR.
- The Advisory Council proposes that the RDC be funded in part through funds obtained from the Federal Government for “indirect cost of research.”
- The Advisory Council proposes that the RDC have at its disposal funds to plan workshops and other outreach activities.
- The Council seeks more information on the possible need for statistical consultancy within the RDC, and the forms that this could take, or for covering some administrative

functions that would allow the Data Analyst more time to act as statistical consultant.

6. Activities of the National Coordinating Committee

-This Committee, chaired originally by Paul Bernard and now by Raymond Currie, is very active, it has been helpful in establishing the links to Statistics Canada, along with the various protocols, profiling the products of RDC research, and is now seeking ongoing funding from SSHRC/CIHR. There are two meetings per year, the next one is 9-10 May.

-After the RDC conferences at McMaster on work, and at Calgary on health, the next conference is on “Canadian families under pressure” at Montreal on 19-20 May.

7. Review of other activities

-Official opening on 22 October, included Richard Barnabé, Gustave Goldmann, Tina Hotton and Cynthia Cook of Statistics Canada, along with Deb Matthews of Parliament of Ontario.

-Visit from Allison Barr, Director of Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, on 16 December.

8. Locating and highlighting products of RDC

-Calls were made to locate products of RDC research by researchers from University of Western Ontario. If this is allowed, these titles will be listed on the web site, with encouragement for others to be sent. This is to include items involving UWO researchers before the UWO RDC opened. Graduate theses involving RDC data are also to be listed.

-Statistics Canada seeks advice concerning products of particular significance that could be highlighted in *The Daily* and/or in other means. The Advisory Council could help in this selection if abstracts were added to the titles.

-We are to determine which venues are available to us at Statistics Canada for dissemination (e.g. *Analytic Studies Research Paper Series*).

-We should also use the media people at UWO for dissemination purposes, and to help profile products of particular significance.

-It may be possible to also profile and highlight the “clustering and interaction” among researchers as important scholarly activities that are facilitated by the RDC.

9. Outreach on campus

-Vince Gray and Cynthia Cook made presentations at the Fall Perspectives on Teaching (September 2004) and to the Aging and Health Research Centre.

-Brad Corbett has been visiting various units to determine their needs.

-The following were considered as potential forms of outreach: workshops on specific methods or data sets, an annual presentation to new faculty and students on the RDC, presentations in the context of existing venues like the Faculty of Medicine Faculty Development Day, presentations to the graduate education courses of given departments and faculties. It was proposed that workshops be announced well in advance, and that

they be interactive with several experts rather than long presentations. A brochure was suggested.

10. The “to do” list based on CFI application

10.1 Collaborative joint research link with Simulated Data Centre at Cornell University (no report)

10.2 Development of event history software (no report)

10.3 Internet Data Library System (IDLS) for use within RDC: Plans are underway to provide IDLS service for data description, but this will not be needed for data access.

10.4. Links with Waterloo, McMaster and Toronto, especially for training and workshops (no report)

10.5. Mexico/INEGI: Tedd Hewitt is seeking to negotiate a means of housing data sets from the statistical agencies of Mexico, the United States and Canada at the University of Western Ontario.