

April 16, 2009

**Research Data Technology Centre  
Advisory Council  
Minutes from Meeting  
13 April 2009, 3:00-4:30, SSC 9430**

**Council:**

Roderic Beaujot, Sociology (Academic Director)  
David Bellhouse, Statistical and Actuarial Sciences (regrets)  
Joyce Garnett, Chief Librarian  
Iris Gutmanis, St. Joseph's Health Centre London (regrets)  
Tedd Hewitt, Research V-P (regrets)  
Julie McMullin, Associate Dean, Faculty of Social Science  
Reza Nakhaie, Sociology, (replaced by Daniel Edelstein), University of Windsor  
Chris Robinson, Economics  
Bridget Ryan (student representative)  
Maira Stewart, Family Medicine (regrets)  
Stewart Thornhill (replaced by Simon Parker), Ivey

**Staff:**

Cynthia Cook, Statistics Canada (Senior Analyst, Regional Supervisor) (regrets)  
Bradley Corbett, Statistics Canada (Analyst) (regrets)  
Vince Gray, Social Science Network and Data Services (Liaison Officer) (regrets)  
Zenaida Ravanera, Information Officer  
Steve Rumas, SSNDS

**Documents:** (as noted below)

**1. Minutes of 27 June 2008**

The minutes have been approved and posted.  
No business arising

**2. Budget**

A draft financial statement was presented.

Income for 2008-09: \$154,389 (carry over from FSS was withdrawn)

Expenses for 2008-09: \$141,616 (includes estimates to the end of the budget year)

A draft budget was presented.

Income for 2009-10: \$154,465 (includes carry over from FSS)

Expenses for 2009-10: \$152,165

Costs have been reduced by putting 1/6 of Ravanera's costs on the RDC budget rather than 1/5.

The difference is carried by the Strategic Knowledge Cluster on Population Change and Lifecourse.

### **3. Statistics Canada, Canadian Research Data Centres Network, and Branch at University of Windsor**

The management at Statistics Canada now has divisional status, called the Microdata Access Division. As of October, Gustave Goldmann will retire and Heather Dryburgh has been named Director.

CFI has approved the budget for the part of the Leading Edge Grant that will create a Virtual Private Network, including the Branches that were not part of the application. Four centres are already connected and the remaining centres and branches are to be hooked into the Wide Area Network by October, but there are still some approvals to be made by Statistics Canada. Steve Rumas has looked after this for Western's RDC. ITS included the costs of installation and the first three years of operation in the estimate for CFI, but there will be a \$1795 annual cost after three years that cannot be covered by the CFI grant.

An MOU is almost finalized to establish the relationship between Universities of Western Ontario and Windsor so that Windsor can have a branch RDC. The construction has started and is scheduled to be completed in July. Plans are in place to hire a statistical assistant.

### **4. Conference on Health over the Life Course, UWO, 15-16 October 2009**

The Organizing Committee has been very active, raising funds, planning the venue and organizing the conference. All this can be seen at the web site:

<http://www.rdc.uwo.ca/conference2009/index.html>

Council was encouraged to circulate information on the conference, including the deadline of 8 May for receiving abstracts.

### **5. Projects, researchers, products**

Parts of the draft of Report to Statistics Canada were distributed. The complete list of products by year (19 pages), and the list of researchers, are available on request. The network level data indicate that Western is staying close to its rank as the 10<sup>th</sup> RDC to open in Canada. Among the 13 RDCs that are covered in the current allocation formula for funding from SSHRC/CIHR, Western had 59 researcher-contract dyads in 2007 and 77 in 2008, representing 3% of the system total in 2007 and 4% in 2008. This put Western in 11<sup>th</sup> rank in 2007 and tied for 11<sup>th</sup> rank in 2008. In terms of contracts, Western had 39 of the 981 active contracts in 2008, representing 4% of the total in the system, and putting Western at 12<sup>th</sup> rank among the 13 RDCs in the allocation formula.

There followed a discussion regarding the actions that would be useful to increase the uptake in the various Departments and Faculties:

- course with RDC data
- targeting people who championed the RDC but who have not developed projects
- promotional presentations
- including students in RDC projects, scholarships, student funding
- exit survey on projects or survey of users
- have students make presentations at departmental series to act as champions
- need for longer term panel data
- maximize knowledge about data available in RDCs

## 6. Statistics and Data series

Zenaida Ravanera summarized past activity, indicated the plans for next year and sought suggestions. The newly established Series, co-organized with the Population and Life Course Studies Inter-Disciplinary Initiative (PLCS/IDI), has had 3 presentations that were well attended: (1) *Data Access at the RDC* (with about 40 participants); (2) *From SPSS to STATA* (31); and *Interested in Tracking Social Change in Canada over the past 20 years? Try the General Social Survey* (25). The fourth in the Series is a 5-day workshop on Longitudinal Data Analysis, with 33 registered participants, will be held on May 19-23, 2009.

Plans for the 2009-2010 Series include 6 presentations, with the first to be held on September 16, 2009, and a 5-day workshop to be held on May 17-21, 2010.

## 7. Knowledge mobilization and impact

Zenaida Ravanera summarized the activities of the Newsletter and Brown Bag series. Twelve Newsletters, aimed at disseminating findings from research done at the RDC, have been produced since its launch in April 2007. The Brown Bag Series, started in September 2007 to complement the Newsletter, has had 9 presentations of research done at the RDC and 3 presentations on specific topics of interest to the RDC users.

Five Brown Bag presentations are planned for academic year 2009-2010, with the first to be held in October 7, 2009, and the last on April 7, 2010. As in previous Brown Bags, a Newsletter will be produced based on the paper that will be presented.

To plan for more effective Brown Bag Series and Newsletter, an evaluation survey is planned in May, 2009. Suggestions were also sought in the meeting, among the suggestions were:

- Make the list of products more visible, including links to the published papers if possible.
- Contact Adrien Ho regarding the Weldon Library's Scholarship@Western.
- Place on the web site a suggested citation to be used at conferences and on papers:  
Analysis for this paper was made possible through access to the Research Data Centre at the University of Western Ontario.
- Have some presentations at the Public Library
- Take advantage of Western News and Web 2.0 facilities
- Contact Teaching Support Centre for suggestions on a protocol for presentations that

focus not on the paper but on an inter-disciplinary discussion of implications and further research. Possibly have a chair who plays a time-keeping and discussion leader role.

- Survey the whole faculty as a means of finding ways to reach out to others.
- Undertake a case study of how a given discipline is using the RDC at Western compared to other places.

## **8. Other business**

Congratulations to Bridget Ryan on the imminent completion of her PhD, and appreciation for her role as student representative on RDC Council.