

26 October 2011

**Research Data Technology Centre  
Advisory Council**

**Minutes of Meeting  
30 Sept. 2011, 3:00-4:30, SSC 5220**

**Council:**

Roderic Beaujot, Sociology (Academic Director)  
David Bellhouse, Statistical and Actuarial Sciences (regrets)  
Joyce Garnett, Chief Librarian (replaced by Eeva Munoz, Associate University Librarian)  
Iris Gutmanis, St. Joseph's Health Centre London  
Ted Hewitt, Research V-P (may be replaced by Dan Sinai) (regrets)  
Andrew Nelson, Associate Dean, Faculty of Social Science  
Daniel Edelstein, Academic Director, Branch RDC, University of Windsor (by conference call)  
(regrets)  
Chris Robinson, Economics (regrets)  
Katherine Breward (student representative) (regrets)  
Moirra Stewart, Family Medicine (regrets)  
Stewart Thornhill, Ivey

**Staff:**

Cynthia Cook, Statistics Canada (Senior Analyst, Regional Supervisor) (regrets)  
Bradley Corbett, Statistics Canada (Analyst)  
Vince Gray, Data Librarian, Western Libraries  
Mike Houlahan, Statistical Assistant, University of Windsor (by conference call) (our fault,  
equipment failure)  
Zenaida Ravanera, Information Officer  
Kam Abado, Social Science Network

**Documents:**

Minutes of meeting of 4 March 2011 see  
[http://www.rdc.uwo.ca/Advisory\\_Council/20110304-UWORDC-minutes.pdf](http://www.rdc.uwo.ca/Advisory_Council/20110304-UWORDC-minutes.pdf)  
Budget sheets (distributed)  
UWORDC Annual Report 2010 dated 14 July 2011

**1. Minutes of 4 March 2011**

**2. Budget**

- The carry forward amounts to \$2,786 in each of the SSHRC and CIHR accounts.
- On the revenue side, besides the \$50,000 UPIF amount, we will only need \$10,000 from FSS.
- The V-P Research Office has allocated \$8580 from the University CFI/IOF for ITS and ORION WAN fees. We will see if the CFI administered at McMaster could cover these operating costs for the next three years.

- The revenue through SSHRC/CIHR will be clearer after the CRDCN meeting on 5-6 October.
- On the expenses, the Director Buy-Out is being paid for three years out of another grant that Beaujot administers. The “indirect cost” for the Secretarial and Administrative comes from the cluster on Population Change and Lifecourse.
- The University Administration is not pursuing the question of seeking to lower the ORION fees.

### **3. Statistics Canada and Canadian Research Data Centres Network**

The CRDCN has appointed a new Knowledge Transfer Coordinator: Sarah Fortin, who previously was Assistant Editor for Policy Options at Institute for Research on Public Policy

We have asked that the CRDCN Executive Committee develop a plan for spending the IOF of the CFI, with a focus on paying operating costs of the RDCs.

The CRDCN conference is in Edmonton on 3-5 October. At this same occasion in Edmonton, there are also a meeting of Academic Directors with Christian Dea of HRSDC regarding the data platform, and a meeting of the CRDCN Executive Committee.

The 2012 Conference will be at University of New Brunswick, about 8-10 October, with the theme of “Poverty, income support and income mobility.”

### **4. Director’s report**

A presentation was made on 19 May to the UWO Health Research Council. A presentation on ICES was made at the same meeting. The models are quite different, but we should explore further how we might share resources and expertise. Andrew Nelson is to arrange for a meeting. In particular, we will explore the possibility of offering analyst services on a cost recovery basis, for researchers who prefer the ICES model as a means of analysing RDC data, for persons who have contract research, or for ICES researchers who would want to transfer RDC output for matching at ICES. Iris Gutmanis can also represent our interests at ICES.

Equipment renewal through the CFI has been slow, but we are not slower than others. We have three quotes for the workstations, and the quotes for the server will be available soon. We are working within the budget of \$40,376 allocated to Western for workstations and server renewal. We expect to be able to spend more of the funds on the server, and less on workstations, than was in the original CFI budget, but this needs to be put together in one application with three quotes. These will also be reviewed by the IT Department at Statistics Canada to ensure that everything passes the inspection that is expected in December 2011.

We have dropped the idea of a thin client model, but we are seeking to ensure that the equipment could be converted to a thin client model at some later date.

The new software (64 bit) will cost about \$4023 need to be part of the total budget submitted to the CFI. We need to note that UWO has a license for ARCGIS that is administered by ITS and that should be available for RDC usage. In advance of the purchase, users will be informed of the software that will be installed, in case we are missing important software. The change to 64 bit will not influence security questions.

Consideration was given to applying to the Ontario Research Fund – Research Excellence, but the “in kind” contributions from Statistics Canada would not count and thus there is not a viable partner for the 2/3 matching funds.

The Summer Institute with Essex University will start this summer with four courses. We should consider, possibly for summer 2013, a course offered in the RDC, using SSC 1020. We are following a development at York University that uses a “classroom next door” that can be secured at specific times, and disconnected to the RDC server at other times. The eight workstations in the current RDC are insufficient for offering a course like this within the RDC.

On 9 March, we organized a visit from Christian Dea of HRSDC. He made a presentation on the federal government data platform, and consulted with interested parties on these questions.

On 28-29 March, Rod Beaujot attended a Data Harmonization Roundtable, organized by CIHR, SSHRC and Genome Canada. The roundtable proposed that an agency be established to house and harmonize data for research on health and society.

On 28 March, Elizabeth Hill, Vince Gray, Iris Gutmanis, and others, were involved in a ODESI/OCUL Health Data Summit in Toronto.

The following is from the Executive Summary of the Annual Report for 2010:

The UWO RDC opened on 2 September 2004, being the 11<sup>th</sup> RDC to open in the country. The infrastructure was built based on an application to CFI as a stand alone grant. In May 2010, a Branch RDC was opened at the University of Windsor. The UWO RDC is staffed by a full-time Analyst, part-time Statistical Assistants both at Western and Windsor, and a part-time Information Officer. The Centre also profits from the presence of a Senior RDC Analyst.

A major change in 2009 has been the downsizing of the Social Science Network and Data Systems in the Faculty of Social Sciences, and thus a need to depend on Western’s ITS for more of the technical support.

#### Projects, researchers and products

Appendix A shows the 59 contracts that were active in 2010 (including 6 projects located at Windsor, 4 projects where UWO is a secondary institution). This includes 26 projects with health components; representing 43.3 percent of projects (see Appendix D). Appendix B lists 133 researchers who used the RDC in 2010 (102 from UWO, 16 from University of Windsor, and 15 others). Students represent 33.1% (44 of 133) of the researchers who have used the UWO RDC. The average monthly adjusted dyads are 146.0 at Western and 2.4 at Windsor, representing 5.0% of the system total (see Table 1a

of Microdata Access Division, Manager's Report for April 2011).

Appendix C lists the total products from the UWORDC. In 2010, there were 29 products, compared to 28 products in 2009, 37 in 2008, 25 in 2007 and 19 in 2006. The number of theses completed were: 1 Masters, 1 Undergraduate Honors. In addition, there are 40 projects (out of 59 active in 2010) involving students.

Knowledge mobilization

Starting in 2007, a UWORDC Brown Bag Series has been held with three main objectives: (a) to showcase research done at the RDC, (b) to provide a forum that focuses on research implications, and (c) to foster interdisciplinary exchanges. To be selected for presentation at the Brown Bag and for the *RDC@Western Research Highlights*, the paper must have been published (or accepted) in a peer-reviewed journal, the thesis has been successfully defended, or the report has been accepted by the agency to which it was submitted. This allows focusing on the implications of the research findings, on the assumption that the research itself has undergone a review process.

The 3 issues of the Newsletter for 2010 are listed in Appendix E. These are housed at Western Libraries as *RDC@Western Research Highlights*:

<http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/rdchighlights/>

The RDC is strongly associated with the SSHRC-funded Population Change and Lifecourse Strategic Knowledge Cluster, the UWO Population and Life Course Studies Inter-Disciplinary Initiative, and a strategic initiative with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada that includes the Aboriginal Policy Research Conference.

Access to data and training

We have collaborated with the Inter-Disciplinary Initiative on Population and Life Course Studies in sponsoring a "Statistics and Data Series at Western." In the Fall, we start with a presentation on accessing publicly available data, then access and use of RDC data, followed by presentations on specific data sets and analytic techniques. In 2010, there were eight presentations and a Summer Workshop on Longitudinal Analysis, on June 7-11, 2010. The strong attendance indicates that this series is responding to an important need (see Appendix F). In 2011 the summer workshop included two sections, both on longitudinal data analysis, with one covering basic techniques and the other going on to more advanced techniques of longitudinal analysis.

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The following are taken from pages 6 and 8 of the Annual Report from 2010. The adjusted dyads and publications count are entered into the allocation formula.

	<b>UWO Windsor Total</b>			<b>%of system</b>
<b>Average monthly</b>				
<b>Adjusted dyads</b>				
2009	116.2	0	116.2	4.3%
2010	146.0	2.4	148.4	5.0%

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<b>Net growth of contracts system</b>	<b>FirstA</b>	<b>Carry</b>	<b>React</b>	<b>Withd</b>	<b>Compl</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%of</b>
2009	31	29	1	2	9	72	4.9%
2010	19	43	6	0	1	69	5.1%

First Activated, Carry over, Reactivated, Withdrawn, Completed, Total at UWO, Total at UWO as % of system total.

Data show UWO and Windsor together, that is the UWO Total.

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**UWO in total publications on CRDCN web site:**

Year	UWO	Total	%from UWO
2000-03	4	123	3.3
2004	5	115	4.3
2005	2	168	1.2
2006	4	205	2.0
2007	10	241	4.1
2008	18	326	5.5
2009	12	376	3.2
2010	9	400	2.3
Total	64	2005	3.2

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Further discussion of the Annual Report:

There is good growth of Western’s researcher/contract dyads, but not of the publications, relative to the system total. Since there has been considerable activity and disclosure, it was decided that the publications are just taking their time to come out, after a second wind.

There was discussion of how to ensure that there is training available through courses and certificates, including collaboration across departments and faculties. The UWORDC is willing to help in establishing the necessary structures. Linda Miller would be useful in planning for a graduate certificate option.

There may be value to having another presentation at the meeting of Associate Deans of Research.

We should see about a presentation at the post-doc research day, or the MYTAX mixer. A presentation at the All Residents Day may also be possible.

The limited uptake from Ivey is mostly related to the lack of data at the firm level. At the same time, there is considerable interest in statistical methods and RDC data from Doctoral students. Brad Corbett is teaching Structural Equation Modeling (BUS 9870a) and he taught Advanced Quantitative Data Analysis (BUS 9860) in January-April 2011. The plan is to alternate the offerings of these two courses going forward.

## **5. Report from Windsor Branch RDC (Daniel Edelstein)**

The total research sessions was 30 in May-December 2010, and 131 so far in 2011 (January to end of August).

Since our equipment failed to bring Mike Houlahan into the meeting, the following has since been added:

The Windsor RDC has had a busy and successful year so far. Faculty at the University of Windsor still comment that they are pleased to have the Windsor RDC as a valuable research resource.

In the middle of October, the University of Windsor will be distributing to select faculty and staff (including the Windsor & Western RDC), a new desktop version of the Polycom video conferencing software used by the UWindsor video conference system. It is a highly reliable industry standard software (unlike Skype or the ACN videophone which are susceptible to crashes) that will be installed on the office PC's of Brad, Rebecca and Mike for weekly Western/Windsor RDC team meetings and to replace the ACN videophone for new researcher orientations in Windsor. Perhaps in the future we could test the software on a Western RDC laptop & webcam for Western/Windsor meetings or to broadcast the Western Data series to researchers in Windsor.

Sociology Prof. Bob Arnold is teaching a Masters course in Data Analysis this fall and is predicting that approximately twelve students will use the RDC for class assignments beginning in late November.

Dan Edelstein is hoping to arrange a meeting of the Windsor RDC Advisory Council in November.

## **6. Statistics and Data Series, and Brown Bag Series (Zenaida Ravanera)**

Since the March 2011 meeting, 3 more presentations in the Statistics and Data Series were made for the 2010-2011 academic year. The attendance has been good with some 30 to 40 persons at each occasion. The Summer Workshops – Introductory and Advanced – on Longitudinal Data Analysis were simultaneously held for two groups on June 6-10, 2011. There were some 30 participants in each group.

There are 8 'lunch-hour' presentations and a 3-day workshop scheduled for the 2011-2012 Academic Year. The 3-day Workshop on Health Data will be held on February 21-23, 2012, and will be conducted by two instructors, Abdelnasser Saïdi and Rose Evra, from Statistics Canada. The Workshop will be funded by the

RDC, the Faculty of Medicine, and Population and Life Course Studies IDI.

The summer workshops on longitudinal analysis that were held in the past 3 years will no longer take place as a joint UWO-Essex University Summer School will be started in the Summer of 2012. While the fees will be higher, the Essex Summer School is expected to bring a larger attendance since we will be taking advantage of their brand, structure, professors and administrative system.

The Brown Bag Series has two presentations schedule for the academic year – one in February or March, the other in April 2012.

### **7. Symposium on Knowledge Synthesis / Knowledge Translation**

Iris Gutmanis provided information about the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry (SSMD) Knowledge Synthesis / Knowledge Translation Symposium that will be held on 18 November, 8:00 AM -1:00 PM. The Symposium aims at knowing, understanding, and tabulating the spectrum of KS/KT research work across all faculties in London, and facilitating the collaboration in KS/KT policy development and strategic planning.

**8. Dates for meetings:** 9 March 2012, 3:00-4:30

### **9. Adjournment**