COMMUNITY AND ORGANIZATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE

ANNUAL REPORT

1989-1990

Harold L. Votey, Jr.
Director
THE DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

Goals and Purposes for Which CORI Was Established

CORI's original charge has been to "serve as a major resource for basic research in the social sciences." Further, "faculty participation in interdisciplinary research" was to be encouraged. This has been interpreted over time to mean that an environment should be created in CORI that encourages, facilitates and administers research activities in the social, behavioral and policy sciences for members of the UCSB community working both within and across disciplines.

What we expect to be able to do is not only to help to increase the volume of social and behavioral science and public policy research, but also to do those things that lead to improvements in the quality of the research that is done. This requires providing the sorts of services reaching the campus and centers of learning elsewhere that keep faculty aware of potential research opportunities and providing the incentives and support that are needed to facilitate the generation of sound research proposals and the prompt completion of research that has been granted funding. Even among researchers who are eminently successful in generating fundable proposals, proposal writing is a tiring and irksome process. Real effort is needed to stimulate as well as encourage faculty to repeatedly put their ideas to the test.

Serving the Academic Needs of the Community

To serve the instructional and research mission of the campus, a number of centers have been established within CORI for groups of faculty with a common research focus. Among these is the MesoAmerican Research Center, directed by Anabel Ford. That group, coming to CORI from SPRI, was the most active in that institute in generating research proposals. Another important group in CORI is the Center for Cognitive Science Research that began with faculty in Educational Psychology, Geography and Psychology, and presently involves in one way or another more than 10 disciplines. This group is the research arm of an academic program in cognitive science that involves faculty and graduate students in 8 disciplines. Many of the graduate students serve as researchers on grants generated by the research group. A major activity of this group that stimulates research as well as advances academic interests is an ongoing year long colloquium series, involving well established researchers from across the country. A well-fledged academic program has evolved out of this research activity in which graduate students can develop an emphasis in Ph.D. degrees in one of the disciplines participating.

A similar activity has been ongoing now for four years in the Center for Labor Analysis. This group is composed almost entirely of economists with a common research focus. Their colloquium series attracts roughly 20 faculty and/or graduate students to each session.
Graduate students are helped to generate topics for dissertations from exposure to these sessions. Additionally, many of these students are involved as research assistants on faculty projects or are teaching assistants in courses relating to the topic material.

An activity established last year has been the Econometrics and Macroeconometrics Seminar Series under the direction of Doug Steigerwald, a young econometrician in the Department of Economics. Members of this group are active in proposal writing and in generating research for publication. A continuing gift from the private sector, matched with CORI funding, supports this activity.

The Center for the Study of Discourse, another move from SPRI, consists of a group of linguists who are conducting comparative studies among English and a set of oriental languages. Current funding for this group comes from a grant from the Pacific Rim Committee.

Other research centers include the Center for Research in Accounting Education, directed by Glenn Owen, the Center for the Study of Business and Public Policy, directed by M. Bruce Johnson, and the Goethe Studies Center, directed by Gerhart Hoffmeister.

On research projects not related to either of these groups, activities are invariably basic research with research and/or policy objectives appropriate to individual disciplines. More often than not, graduate or undergraduate students are involved with all phases of the research, from proposal writing to final reports, so that students get excellent training in all aspects of research.

Response to Needs of the Public at Local, State, and National Levels

The most obvious link between public needs and research conducted within CORI relates to those proposals with an obvious public policy emphasis. An excellent example of this has been the study, recently compiled, directed by Professor Dan Botkin of Environmental Studies and Biology, on the effects on Mono Lake of overdrafting the basin’s water sources by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. This was a study funded by the Assembly of the California Legislature. CORI filled the role of grants management. A number of grants were awarded dealing with the geology, hydrology, air quality, biology and ecology of Mono Lake. The blue ribbon panel monitoring these studies developed a final report now over a year old that appears to be having a major influence on legislation and judicial activity at the state and national levels in establishing policy for the waters of the Mono Lake basin.

A second example is the work of the Health Data Research Facility, directed by Ron Williams. That group has generated a methodology for evaluating hospital effectiveness in reducing perinatal mortality that has attracted national interest. Standards have been established that ultimately have met with the approval of local, state, and national health
authorities that will help hospitals in formulating policy to improve their performance. This work continues to receive wide attention in medical journals and the popular press as the results of Dr. Williams' studies reach the public.

A project just completed that is expected to have significant impact on public measures relating to the forest environment of the Pacific Northwest is the research of Walter Mead on the costs and benefits of preserving old growth stands of timber for the Northern Spotted Owl. That study confronts the issue of whether old growth timber harvesting should be controlled to preserve the owl's habitat. At issue are jobs in the timber industry and the survival of the owl.

Plans for the Future

Plans for the future in CORI are a matter of searching for and taking advantage of new research opportunities. The main emphasis will be through the centers that involve groups of cooperating faculty. At the same time, we will always be alert to opportunities to expand into new areas. The Mono Lake study was an example of taking advantage of such an opportunity to conduct public policy research. Other areas that have the potential for new research advances in which CORI investigators are work related to archeology, the economics and politics of the Pacific Rim, learning in mathematics, natural resource management, including timber, water and energy use, labor and population studies, and the control of crime.

The objective is to maintain CORI's long run record of assisting faculty in the social and behavioral sciences. Plans for achieving this include meeting with faculty in each of the social science departments, offering encouragement and incentives to campus members who have good ideas about the generation of new research projects, and helping to clear away obstacles to the development of timely research proposals.
C. OTHER ACADEMIC PROJECTS
Seminars/Symposia/Conferences

**Cognitive Science Colloquium Series 1989/90**

November 19, 1989  "Murphy: A Connectionist Approach to Vision-Based Path-Planning for a Multi-Link Robot Arm:
*Bartlett A. Mel, Division of Biology, California Institute of Technology*

February 23, 1990  "The Lexicography of Risk"
*Charles J. Fillmore, Department of Linguistics, UC Berkeley*

March 2, 1990  "Psychophysics, Physiology, and the Theory of Ideal Observers"
*Wilson S. Geisler, Department of Psychology, The University of Texas at Austin*

March 9, 1990  "Audition in Teleoperator and Virtual Environment Systems"
*Nathaniel Durlach, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, NASA-Ames Research Center*

**Econometric Seminar Series**

Under the direction of Douglas Steigerwald of the Department of Economics, a series of seminars focusing on econometrics and macroeconomics were held during 1989/90. The following speakers presented talks at the CORI sponsored seminars:

Dennis Aigner, UC Irvine
Rob Engle, UC San Diego
Cheng Hsiad, University of Southern California
Jim Powell, University of Wisconsin
Glenn Rudebusch, Federal Reserve Board
Jati Sengupta, UC Santa Barbara
Sunil Sharma, UC Los Angeles
Doug Steigerwald, UC Santa Barbara
Jeff Woodridge, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Santa Barbara Economic Forecast Seminar

This one-day seminar was held on April 11, 1990 at the Four Seasons Biltmore Hotel in Santa Barbara. The seminar was under the direction of Mark Schniepp.


"National and State Forecast." Larry J. Kimball, Graduate School of Management, UC Los Angeles.

"The Returns to Home Ownership in Santa Barbara, 1959-1989." Jon Sonstelie, Department of Economics, UC Santa Barbara
**CORE FUNDING FOR: COMMUNITY & ORGANIZATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

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COMMUNITY & ORGANIZATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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(including other UC campuses)

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