THE INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH
of the
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN
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of the
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Two papers describing the origins, history and present organizational life of the Institute

Part I: The University Setting

Part II: The Internal Organization

Ann Arbor
1965
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FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

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April 1965
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INTRODUCTION

The Institute for Social Research is a branch of The University of Michigan engaged since 1946 in the study of human behavior in a variety of social contexts. It is administratively independent of the teaching colleges and departments and is interdisciplinary in both staff composition and range of research problems. It has its own permanent staff of research and administrative personnel and is self-supporting through research grants and contracts. Through gradual growth over the years, it has become one of the leading university-based social research institutions of the world in terms of staff size and volume of scientific publication.

The autonomy of the Institute within a university organization has allowed it to borrow from various academic traditions and yet to innovate in some purposeful, or at least self-conscious, ways. It is the product of deliberate planning for the creation of an Institute designed to have certain desired properties and competencies. For these reasons of autonomy and deliberateness, some of the dilemmas and strategies in the conduct of organized social research are perhaps more clearly visible in this Institute than in many others.

There has been much interest in the Institute's history, in its formal organization and functions within the University, and in the internal processes through which it operates. This descriptive document is intended for those who have more than a passing concern about the organization of social research. It is, in fact, a revised version of papers originally prepared for a national conference of scientific and professional people concerned with the changing role of social research in our society. Part I describes the origin of the Institute and some aspects of its roles and functions within the context of a major university. Part II is concerned with the internal organization, and with some of the policies and practices that guide the work of the Institute. Part I was originally prepared by Rensis Likert, Director of the Institute, and Part II by Stanley E. Seashore, Assistant Director.
I. THE UNIVERSITY SETTING

RENSIS LIKERT

At the end of World War II, some of the professional staff of the Division of Program Surveys, an agency of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, formed a plan for moving to a university setting to establish a new kind of survey research facility. This plan arose out of a conviction that quantitative methods in the social sciences had reached a point of maturity that made feasible and timely the creation of new organizational facilities. The aim was to create an agency for large-scale sample survey research that would be solidly rooted in an academic context, with potentiality for making substantial contributions through basic theoretical and methodological studies linked with the teaching activities of a university.

We sought a university with strong social science departments, located in an attractive community, with easy access to railroad and air transportation. The University of Michigan proved to be such a place. With the active interest and support of a number of people at the University, plans were matured and activated during the summer of 1946. The new research facility, tentatively named the Social Science Surveys Project, came into being. The initial core staff included Rensis Likert as Director, together with Angus Campbell, George Katona, Charles Cannell and Leslie Kish. Prominent among those at the University who encouraged and aided this development were Donald Marquis, Robert Angell and Theodore Newcomb, then chairmen, respectively, of the Psychology and Sociology departments and of the combined graduate curriculum in Social Psychology. Dr. J. P. Adams, then Provost of the University, lent his interest and support in the venture as a representative of the University's administration.

From a rather modest origin, the new organization has grown in size and scope of activities, has achieved recognition as a source of leadership and innovation in certain fields of research, and has provided substantial aid to the emergence of The University of Michigan as a leading center for research and instruction in the social and behavioral sciences.

Our purpose in the following pages is to give an account of the establishment and present administrative arrangements of the Institute for Social Research. The focus will be upon the institutional character of the organization and upon its roles, functions and working relationships within a university setting. Discussion of the internal operations of the Institute are deferred for fuller treatment in part II of this document.

First Steps

The official launching of the new facility occurred through an action of the Board of Regents of the University, following a year of discussion and joint planning with various department chairmen, deans and representatives of the University administration. The administration adopted a friendly but skeptical
point of view, reflected in the phrasing of the original Regental action in June of 1946:

The Board approved the establishment of the Social Science Surveys Project, which is a research and service project in the field of public opinion survey, on an experimental basis, subject to the following provisions:

... That this project shall be supported by grants from outside sources and/or compensation for services rendered and shall not be a charge on the general funds of the University.

... That all appointments of persons attached to this project, including such part-time appointments as they may hold in the faculties of the teaching units, shall be, for the time being and until specifically otherwise authorized, appointments for a limited term of one year with the understanding that such persons do not acquire tenure.

... That this project may be terminated at any time in the discretion of the Board of Regents.

In September 1946, the Regents took the following further action designed to establish the conditions for direction, control, and membership in the new facility:

At the meeting of the Regents on June 21, 1946, approval was given to the establishment of the Social Science Surveys Project. The Board now changes the name of this project to the Survey Research Center, to be administered under the direction of Dr. Rensis Likert, under the following conditions:

... The Survey Research Center is hereby established (effective August 1, 1946) as a research, service and training project of the University.

... The Center shall be under the direction of a Director assisted by an Executive Committee. The Director shall be appointed by the Board of Regents on recommendation by the President. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Dean of the Graduate School or a representative designated by him, the Director, who shall be chairman, and six additional members of the University Senate [i.e., tenure faculty] representing fields related to the activities of the Center, to be appointed by the Board of Regents on recommendation by the President.

... The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the determination of general policy regarding the nature and scope of the research, service and training activities of the Center and, in cooperation with the responsible officers of the teaching units and subject to their approval, for the coordination of the activities of the Center with the research and training functions of such units. The Committee shall be responsible for the recommendation of appointments of members of the staff of the Center and for recommendations related to its budget. The Committee shall also be responsible for the approval of contracts for service to be rendered by the Center, with the understanding that such contracts must also have the approval of the Vice-President in charge of business and finance.

... All appointments to membership on the staff of the Center shall be in accordance with the provisions of Section 5.09 of the BYLAWS, and any correlative appointments which such persons may hold on the teaching or research staffs of teaching units shall be, for the time being and until otherwise specifically authorized, appointments for a term of one year and without tenure. The Center is established with the understanding that its activities are to be financially self-supporting from the proceeds of contracts for service or from grants for research or training and that it will impose no burden upon the general funds budget of the University. For the time being, the Director and Executive Committee of the Center shall be responsible to the Provost with the understanding that further consideration shall be given during the year to the place of this project in the structure of the University.

Section 5.09 of the Bylaws reads, in part, as follows:

(5) Appointments to positions paid in whole or in part from limited term grants of funds for special purposes shall, unless otherwise specifically provided by the Board of Regents, be subject to the following provisions regarding termination of service and salary in the event of cessation of funds from such special sources:

(b) In case of persons not previously employed by the University, both the service and the salary shall forthwith terminate regardless of the rank or title held.

In this manner the Survey Research Center was launched. The anomalous status of the new organization and its staff, as well as the uncertainty of its fate, were implicit in the official actions. The Center was provided office space and some working capital for immediate expenses but otherwise was to be self-supporting. The Center was to coordinate its research and training activities with those of the teaching departments, but there existed little precedent in the social sciences as to how this might best be accomplished. The key staff members were provided faculty appoint-
ments, but were to be governed by personnel policies (such as those concerning tenure, academic privilege, and provision of vacations and other benefits) applicable to non-academic employees of the University. The uncertainty about future income for the new venture from outside sources required an explicit limitation of the University's fiscal responsibility.

Objectives

The original objectives of the Survey Research Center were stated as follows:

1. To provide a well-trained staff to conduct sample surveys on problems which are scientifically important or which are of major significance to our society.
2. To provide graduate and post-doctoral instruction and experience in the conduct of sample surveys.
3. To conduct methodological research to improve and develop survey procedures.
4. To disseminate findings with regard to substantive research and methodology through such processes as publication, teaching, consultation, and participation in professional meetings.
5. To help integrate the social sciences by providing facilities for research on problems which involve more than one department or scientific field, and to foster basic theoretical advances in the social sciences based on new data from research involving problems cutting across several different scientific fields.

These objectives, appropriately broadened to include specific attention to research methods other than the sample survey, are still the objectives of the Institute for Social Research and the guide for current activities. However, a sixth objective has been added:

6. To develop procedures for the interpretation and application of research findings.

This last objective was made explicit in 1948, at the time when the Survey Research Center was joined with the Research Center for Group Dynamics; it has since been expressed in the creation, in 1964, of a third Center called the Center for Research on the Utilization of Scientific Knowledge.

Research Center for Group Dynamics

Kurt Lewin, one of the pioneers in the experimental study of group processes, had established a Research Center for Group Dynamics in 1945 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After his death in 1947, the senior staff of that center decided to move as a body to another university having a strong social science orientation. They were invited to join forces with the Survey Research Center, an offer they accepted in 1948. We wished to continue the separate identities of the two Centers, so we named the combined organization the Institute for Social Research, with the Centers being the operating divisions. This joining of the two Centers brought to The University of Michigan a number of people who have substantially enriched the research programs and instructional activities at Michigan; among them were Dorwin Cartwright, Ronald Lippitt, John R. P. French, Jr., and Leon Festinger.

Since the work of the Research Center for Group Dynamics is amply described in other documents there is need here for only a brief comment. From its origin, this Center has been concerned with both the theory and also the practice of the principles of group behavior. It pioneered in the design and conduct of experiments on behavior in groups, both in the laboratory and in field settings. It has been concerned with such processes as group formation, group change and dissolution, intergroup relations, interpersonal relations within groups, and the influence of group membership upon individuals. While its own research activities proceed quite independently of those in the other Centers, many of the key concepts and research methods derived from group experiments have been found useful in survey studies and in connection with field studies involving experimental changes in social behavior. The presence of this Center has thus greatly enriched the whole of the Institute's research program.
To complete the overall picture of the Institute and its present three component Centers, we should mention here a very recent event, namely, the creation of a third Center in 1964.

For a number of years, in both of the original Centers there had been active interest and research concerning the social psychological processes related to the diffusion and utilization of new knowledge. This interest was expressed vigorously in studies of organizational change, of the mobilization of community self-help programs, of the improvement of teaching practices, of the role relations among professional groups, and in other areas. Others within the University were also concerned with similar problems. There arose a sense of need and opportunity to review these activities and to consider the creation of an organizational entity designed to encourage basic research on the problems shared by many professional and disciplinary branches of the University.

A study committee was formed in 1962, with the aid of funds provided by the Ford Foundation, to assess the situation and recommend a course of action. The outcome of this work was the following communication to the Regents of the University, which was acted upon favorably at their June meeting in 1964.

It is recommended that there be established a Research Center for the Utilization of Scientific Knowledge, effective July 1, 1964. This recommendation is based upon the work of a special advisory committee appointed by Vice President Heyns in the Fall of 1962 to consider how The University of Michigan might mobilize the resources of the behavioral sciences toward the end of ensuring the application for public benefit of the scientific knowledge that is being generated at an ever-increasing rate. The members of this committee were Professors Ronald Lippitt (chairman), Stanford C. Erikson, Ned A. Flanders, William N. Hubbard, Jr., Robert L. Kahn, Daniel Katz, D. Maynard Phelps, William E. Porter, Irwin M. Rosenstock, Guy E. Swanson, and Edwin J. Thomas.

The objectives of the Center will be:

1. To conduct studies and experiments concerning the process of science utilization, with a special focus on the roles of professional and non-professional persons and groups in the diffusion and utilization of new knowledge.

2. To conduct studies and experiments concerning the kinds of training that best will prepare practitioners effectively to receive and to utilize new knowledge in their respective fields.

3. To consider the role of human values and of the humanistic disciplines in relation to issues arising from the use of scientific knowledge. The proposed Center will be administratively located within the Institute for Social Research, and will be governed by the officers and the Executive Committee of that Institute under the direction of the Vice President for Research. The Director of the new Center will be Professor Floyd C. Mann, Professor Lippitt, Chairman of the Advisory and Planning Committee, will join the Center as Program Director for research activities.

The new Center began operations on July 1, with an initial staff and several active research studies transferred from the previously existing Centers. An advisory committee composed of faculty members from various schools and departments was created to guide the development of the new Center in ways most useful to the University as a whole.

Relations within the University

A critical early issue in the planning of the new Institute involved the definition of its relationships with the several relevant disciplines and with the instructional units representing these disciplines. Consideration was given to two different models or precedents then prevailing in university organizations, and both were rejected in favor of an organizational plan of a kind not commonly found in the social and behavioral sciences.

One model provides for the incorporation of the research organization within a particular school or department. This was thought inappropriate to the purpose of the new Insti-
tute, for the reason that disciplinary identification and departmental control would discourage the conduct of research on topics outside of departmental interests and on problems that cross disciplinary boundaries. It was felt then, as now, that many of the most significant research issues are at the boundaries of disciplines and do not fall clearly within any one. The forming of an interdisciplinary staff would be made difficult in an organization administratively located within any one of the traditional academic disciplines. Accordingly, it was thought important that the new organization be established on a university-wide basis, with the equal possibility of collaboration with any school or department.

An alternative and commonly used model provides for a university-wide organization consisting of a small permanent staff, mainly for administrative and service functions, supplemented by temporary research staff members drawn from the teaching units on a released-time basis. This model has the attractive feature of permitting flexible use of a large and varied staff. It has the complementary defect of discouraging certain kinds of long-term, programmatic research activities that demand a staff of people who can give a substantial and continuing effort to the work. In addition, this form of organization tends to separate the administrative, service and fiscal responsibilities from the research itself, and this was thought to be inappropriate in the case of an organization that had to be self-directing and self-supporting.

The model of organization chosen for the Institute, however, contains elements of the foregoing plans. We are a University-wide institute with permanent research and administrative staff, with all key staff members having their major and continuing appointments with the Institute itself, with no restrictions as to the disciplinary identification of staff members, and with internal policies designed uniquely to sustain the main research objectives of the staff. Discipline-oriented staff groups exist within the Institute, but their primary identification is with their research programs rather than with other academic activities. The Director of the Institute is responsible to a high-level general administrative officer of the University (initially to the Provost and currently to the Vice President for Research) rather than to the dean of a school or department. Collaboration with the various schools and departments and the occasional sharing of some staff is arranged through voluntary negotiation between organizationally-equal units.

Financial Support

As provided in the original action of the Board of Regents, the Institute was from the start a self-supporting research unit. The University's practical aid, however, was greater than is suggested by the formal action of the Regents. The University provided office space, utilities, and janitorial service. It also provided working capital (i.e., the underwriting of short-term indebtedness) and such services as those performed by the legal counsel, payroll office, and the internal auditors. The most important and generous financial support, however, had to do with the use of overhead income.

The usual practice at Michigan and elsewhere is for each research project budget to include some provision for necessary costs beyond those directly chargeable to the project, this overhead income being used by the University administration to help offset the University-wide costs of maintaining physical facilities and administrative services. In the case of the Institute for Social Research, however, this overhead income is credited to an account administered by the Institute staff within policies established by the University. From this account the Institute pays its own current indirect costs of doing research (e.g., accounting, communications, furniture and equipment, etc.), and allocates a modest but critical sum each year for certain research
activities that do not receive outside support. These “overhead research projects” include methodological studies, pilot studies leading to new project proposals, comparative analyses of data from completed studies, integrative writing, staff participation in scientific and professional activities, and the like. In years when the overhead income is adequate, some balance is allocated to a reserve fund; this fund is now sufficient to provide current working capital and to assure some term of staff continuity in the event that research project income should be sharply curtailed. This unique provision regarding the use of overhead income was initially, and continues to be, a critical factor in the survival, stability and growth of the Institute. It has enabled us to retain staff members during the unavoidable periods between projects; it has enabled us to risk the starting of new research ventures without waiting for confirmation of expected outside support; it provides some security for our senior staff.

During our first year at Michigan virtually all our income came from research contracts with agencies of the Federal Government. During subsequent years we endeavoured to diversify our sources of support, partly to limit the probability of a disaster should a particular source of income be closed off, and partly to assure a diversification of the kinds of research problems and interests available to the staff. The aim generally has been to obtain research support about equally from the Federal Government, from private foundations, and from private organizations other than foundations. In any given year, the proportions will deviate from this ideal. With rapidly rising Federal research efforts, for example, about half of our research support in the last years has come from the Federal Government and only about a fifth from private organizations. The Institute has grown steadily over the years from an initial budget of a quarter-million dollars to a budget approaching three millions of dollars.

In keeping with its status of fiscal autonomy and responsibility within the general University regulations, the Institute maintains its own budgeting and accounting system. This system is designed specifically to meet the needs of senior staff who must operate within the limits of grant and contract funds obtained by themselves and administered by themselves. Accounts are kept separately for each study and each Center, with allocations from each study budget to help support the shared institutional administrative facilities and staff. All contracts and grants, however, are executed in the name of the Board of Regents, and are under the fiscal surveillance and ultimate control of the University’s Vice President for Finance.

Administration

The Institute is organized as a collegium of semi-autonomous Program Directors, each having full responsibility for the administrative as well as the scientific aspects of his program of research. We now have 22 staff members who are Program Directors or heads of sections having similar functions. It is the work of this group and of our Center Directors that has been primarily responsible for our achievements. We have allocated to the Program Directors the responsibility for conceptualizing the research to be undertaken, securing and expending the necessary funds, recruiting and directing the research personnel engaged in the different projects in their program and providing on-the-job training, reviewing and integrating the research reports emerging from the different projects, and publishing the major findings. The Center Directors provide assistance, but the primary responsibility for these tasks falls upon the Program Director. This arrangement gives each Program Director great freedom in the planning and conduct of his research but also substantially increases the total load he carries.

In the administration of the Institute, we
have endeavored to apply the findings emerging from our own studies of group dynamics, leadership and organizational performance. This has influenced the concept of the Program Directors’ position and our use of overlapping groups for communication, influence and decision-making purposes. In addition to innumerable special-purpose and ad-hoc groups formed to deal with Institute-wide and Center-wide problems, there are a number of standing committees designed to deal with major administrative and policy matters.

The Executive Committee

In establishing its major policies and procedures, the Institute has had the invaluable advice and guidance of its Executive Committee composed, for the most part, of members of the University faculty who have an interest in the Institute work but have no other form of membership in the Institute. Nine of the eleven members are appointed for overlapping three-year terms by the Board of Regents upon nomination by the President. The other two, as stated in the Regent’s action quoted previously, serve ex officio.

The Executive Committee is responsible for the establishment of policies which will serve the best interests of the entire University. They do not “represent” particular departments or schools nor decide issues in such terms. One of their chief contributions has been to create policies and administrative guides that have brought about a relationship of cooperation and mutual aid between the Institute and the various other parts of the University that share our research interests. They also have made significant contributions to the development of improvements in personnel policies affecting all research people throughout the University.

Research Policies

Self-supporting research institutes face dilemmas and hard choices regarding the kinds of grants and contracts they will seek and those they will accept. The compulsions of fiscal security and convenience must be kept from leading the staff into activities that may undermine the character of the institute and its potentiality for adding significantly to the quality of the University as a whole. Our Executive Committee has helped us to create and maintain sound research policies. Three of these deserve mention here.

The Institute will undertake programs and studies only if they offer a substantial promise for the generation of information and ideas of scientific importance, and only if they are related to issues of social significance. Some studies, of course, turn out in the end to be trivial or inconsequential, but none is undertaken with this expectation. Our Executive Committee has kept this policy in mind in the process of reviewing and approving each grant or contract proposal prior to its acceptance by the University. Our senior staff have been guided by this policy as they plan research activities and seek financial support. The significance of the policy is felt most keenly when a staff member finds he is refusing to accept restrictive funds offered by an outside agency while at the same time he is undertaking, with considerable effort and risk, to find support for some venture more in keeping with the broad purposes of the Institute.

Another important policy, which our Executive Committee helped establish, defined further the character of the research grants or contracts which we will accept: we will do no


2 A list of the present and past members of the Institute’s Executive Committee appears at the end of this document.
wholly confidential research for private organizations. All of our contracts provide that the data collected belong to the University, that they remain available to us for further scientific analyses, and that the scientific findings may be published. We have undertaken a few projects classified for reasons of national interest or national defense; however, the major findings of all of these studies with but one exception have been published. The choice of manner and time of publication rests with the Institute, with priority ordinarily given to publication of theoretical papers and supporting data in the scientific and professional journals. Some studies do not, by themselves, produce separate publishable results but are joined with related studies for the eventual public reporting of the work. In all instances, the Institute is guided by existing ethical codes regarding the use of private information, and when publication of study details might be harmful to research subjects or informants, this information is not revealed. The implementation of this policy, particularly in our collaboration with private organizations, has rested upon their acceptance of the Institute's character as a public and scientific organization, and upon their confidence in our handling of private information necessarily acquired in the conduct of the work.

A third major research policy established and maintained by the Institute concerns the freedom of the individual research staff member to determine the content, methods and interpretation of his work. The Institute's Executive Committee has sustained the idea that the Institute shall not be obliged to undertake research of a service character, i.e., at the request of an outside organization or of another unit of the University. While many studies do have their origin in such requests, they must meet the test of compatibility with research program objectives and of engaging the interest of some staff member. In instances where it is felt that the views of a sponsor might infringe unduly upon the work of the staff member or on the scientific interpretation of his results, protective devices (for example, impartial advisory committees not responsible to the sponsor) are sometimes introduced to insure some tolerable degree of scientific independence while working on controversial issues.

Collaboration within the University

The initiative and support of the chairmen of the Social Science departments were instrumental, as mentioned previously, in launching the Institute. Continued support by these and other departments, as well as by the professional schools, has contributed greatly to the effectiveness of the Institute's efforts and has enlarged its scope of activities. This has been especially important in enabling the Institute's senior staff to contribute to the graduate instruction programs of the University.

As a university-wide research organization, the Institute is in a position to cooperate readily with any school or department in any teaching program or research undertaking. It is significant that the extent of cooperative undertakings in both teaching and research has grown and at an accelerating rate.

Collaboration in Teaching

During the last academic year a total of thirty members of the Institute staff have engaged in teaching at the request of a school or department. None of these individuals devotes more than one-third of his time to teaching. Institute members have taught or are teaching in the departments of Economics, Journalism, Mathematics, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts; and in the Schools of Education, Public Health, Law, Social Work, and Business Administration; in the College of Engineering; and in the Extension Service.
The courses or seminars taught by Institute staff normally deal with methodological or substantive areas allied with the staff member's current research in the Institute. Many of these courses involve new methodologies or new substantive areas to which the research of the Institute is making a major contribution. For example, in the psychology of economic behavior, and the quantitative study of political behavior, courses introduced by Institute staff members have had a significant impact upon the curricula not only at Michigan but also at other universities.

In addition to formal instruction, the Institute staff carry a heavy load of individualized teaching and guidance for doctoral candidates, serving both as chairmen and as committee members for degree candidates. During the first eighteen years of our existence, over 120 doctoral theses were completed by students using Institute data and facilities. The Institute also does much "on-the-job" training in research. Over 60 advanced graduate students are employed currently, usually part-time, on studies relevant to their interests. Many other students are also employed in less advanced technical work.

The initiative in inviting an Institute staff member to teach in the University's regular instructional program lies with the teaching unit. When a department invites a member of the Institute to teach a particular course or seminar, the department determines the appropriate rank of appointment by its own standards while the decision as to the amount of time involved is determined jointly by the department and the Institute. To avoid ambiguities in the terms of appointment and associated perquisites (the departments and the Institute having equivalent but different personnel policies) the individual remains a full-time employee of the Institute. The department or college involved transfers to the Institute a sum equal to its prorated share of the individual's salary, the salary rate being determined by the Institute. Under these circumstances all individuals whose primary appointment is in the Institute experience coherent and uniform policies, while the teaching units retain control over their curricula and choice of staff.

**Collaboration in Research**

Cooperation between the Institute and the different schools, colleges and departments in the conduct of research has been growing rapidly in recent years, as our resources have enlarged and as the benefits of collaboration have become more evident to us and to others. This collaboration takes three main forms. In some instances, the Institute's staffs for sampling, coding, interviewing and data processing are made available to others in support of their research without much involvement in the conception and planning of the research. In other instances, the planning and conduct of studies has been undertaken with fully shared and joint responsibility for the venture. A third form of collaboration is seen in the numerous instances in which some teaching unit or administrative unit of the University defines its objectives in a general way and then, in effect, contracts with the Institute for the design and conduct of the study.

During the year 1964, twenty-three separately budgeted studies were active under these arrangements for internal collaboration; in addition, there were numerous other instances of collaboration through exchange of staff members or through intensive although informal sharing of work. The range of these collaborative connections is illustrated by the following partial list of University units so engaged during the past year: the departments of Political Science, Sociology, and Physical Education; the Schools of Law, Education, Public Health, Social Work, and Literature, Science and Arts; special units including, the Mental Health Research Institute, the Center for Population Studies, the Bureau of Public Health Economics, the
Bureau of Hospital Administration, the Faculty Senate, and the University Administration.

While a full roster of these activities need not be detailed here, some examples will illustrate the forms of collaboration that exist. We have collaborated with Professor Alfred Conard of the Law School in a joint study of legal and economic aspects of automobile injury compensation systems. Our Sampling Section is providing to the Bureau of Hospital Administration improved methods for drawing samples of hospitals and of patients within hospitals. At the request of the Administration, we are conducting a survey study of the opinions of University non-academic employees regarding the personnel policies and practices of the University.

External Collaboration in Research

From its early years, there have been pressures and attractions toward active sharing of our research facilities and data with scholars from other institutions. Initially, this collaboration consisted entirely of informal and individualized inter-institutional exchange of kinds that characterize the academic community generally. Scholars elsewhere were sought out for consultation in areas of their specialization; others attracted by the methods we used or by the unique data available at the Institute came for brief or extended visits, sometimes departing with sets of data suitable for their own research purposes. The chief attraction to others lay in the availability of survey data and methods and of a staff experienced in group laboratory techniques, these not being commonly available to research scholars, but essential for some purposes.

In more recent years, the basis for external collaboration has changed somewhat. The accumulation of data archives, including time-series studies over a span of some years, has brought into being a new research resource having potential value far beyond the capacity of our own staff to exploit fully, and having value for some kinds of research that lie outside of the interests of Institute staff members. New organizational entities have had to be created to deal with the emerging problems of long-term planning and of the joint utilization of a common pool of social science data.

This trend emerged first in connection with the accumulation of data from nation-wide sample surveys of consumer and family economics, and has developed on a still-larger scale in relation to studies of political behavior. Current plans include the exploration of a similar archival collaboration with other institutions with respect to the comparative study of organizational structure and of behavior in organizations. Behind these developments is an awareness of the great power and economy of research designs that are unrestricted by the large costs of original field data-gathering activities. Another consideration is the realization of the power of time-series data for resolving many issues of social theory and trend determination.

Collaboration in Economic Studies

The periodic national surveys of consumer behavior and family economics have been sustained continuously since 1947, and are now conducted regularly on a quarterly basis. It was early realized that the initial analysis and publication plans of our own staff would not exhaust the value of the data. Economists at other institutions became aware of the existence of the data and expressed their interest. The policy was adopted, and since continued, of freely sharing the data with qualified scholars to the extent that their work would not conflict with analysis plans of our own staff, and to the extent there was provision for the relatively minor cost of preparing the data in forms suitable for use. Accordingly, card decks with such data have been provided to colleagues in such institutions as the follow-
ing, among others: the Cowles Foundation for Research in Economics (Yale University), the Social Systems Research Institute (Wisconsin), the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce (Pennsylvania), the National Bureau of Economic Research, and the Department of Economics (University of Minnesota).

As the scope of this activity grew, steps were taken to revise the data storage methods with a view toward making the data more conveniently accessible and more standardized in form. Steps were taken also to provide advanced training to selected scholars in analytic methods, and to provide a mechanism for joint advance planning toward the end of having new surveys accommodate special interests not represented on our own staff. A grant from the Ford Foundation aided greatly in launching this effort. An advisory committee, composed of leading economists representing other major universities and independent economic research institutions, was formed in 1959 and continues presently to provide general guidance with respect to the content of surveys and policies for the joint use of the data.

Inter-University Consortium for Political Research

Another example of the Institute's efforts toward external collaboration is in the area of research on political behavior. There was established in 1961, in cooperation with twenty-one other universities, an organization called the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research. Since this venture may become a model for others, at Michigan or elsewhere, we shall describe it in some detail.

The aims of the Consortium include (1) joint planning of new surveys and other related data-gathering, data storage and retrieval operations, (2) sharing of the common pool of data concerning political behavior, (3) coordinating analysis plans to minimize duplication of effort and maximize exchange of current theory and analysis results, (4) sharing of some training activities for staff and students of the member institutions. The Consortium operates through a central technical staff located within the Survey Research Center, with policies and activities of the Consortium determined by a Committee of Representatives drawn from the member Universities. The Consortium's own initial statement of purposes and methods reads as follows:

1. Individuals from the cooperating universities have formed a Committee of Representatives to work with the staff of the Survey Research Center in planning Consortium activities. This Committee will come together for annual meetings with representatives of the Survey Research Center to review the activities of the program, to make decisions regarding contemporary operations, to project future developments, and to plan new studies. [The first meeting of the Committee was held in Ann Arbor in June of 1962].

2. The Consortium will sponsor new studies. The technical conduct of the studies after the determination of objectives will be the responsibility of the Survey Research Center. Member universities will have complete freedom of publication of all materials gathered at the direction of the Committee of Representatives. [The first ICPR sponsored study, approved at the June meeting of the Committee of Representatives, was a minor collection of data following the 1962 Congressional elections.]

3. The Survey Research Center will conduct summer training institutes for representatives from the member universities, the Center providing staff and facilities and the Consortium or the member universities providing the stipends and expenses of the participants.

4. The Survey Research Center will provide supervision and facilities to a limited number of pre-doctoral or post-doctoral interns nominated by member universities and appointed by the Committee of Representatives for a term of one year or less.

5. Each member university will receive a complete set of questionnaire forms, codes, data cards, and straight runs from all studies in which they participate. To protect the research interests of participants, these materials will be made available to non-member universities only with the approval of the Committee.

6. The Survey Research Center will also make available to members, and facilitate their use of, its
extended collection of data from . . . [its various specified] . . . election studies.

7. The Survey Research Center will provide advice on technical problems to individual members as desired and will carry out machine tabulations or clerical services as requested at cost.

The Consortium is presently financed jointly by the member universities and by foundation grants. The universities are each contributing an annual appropriation of $2,500 to a special fund administered through the Survey Research Center. This Consortium fund is used for the support of the Survey Research Center staff who are associated with the program, for the processing and disseminating of data, for the conduct of the training institutes, and for the incidental expenses of the Committee of Representatives. A grant was made by the Stern Family Foundation to support developmental activities of the Consortium during the period of organization. Financial support for new collections of data, such as those relating to the 1964 Presidential election, is sought in separate requests to private and public foundations. The foundations and other fund-granting agencies are also approached by the Consortium for support for research conferences and intern training.

The aims of the Consortium have been enlarged since they were initially formulated. The roster of member universities has grown from the initial twenty-one to over forty, including some in other countries. Within the first two years, over 400 requests for special data or specialized computer output have been received and processed—many more than had been anticipated. The central archives now include not only the studies of SRC and those carried out within the framework of the Consortium, but also include selected data from current and prior studies conducted elsewhere. Plans are committed and work is in progress for adding to the archives the basic election data and some related census and economic data for Congressional and Presidential elections back to 1823, and the services of an historian have been required to guide the collection of these data. The problems of efficient archival procedures have led to innovations in data storage and retrieval practice and to the forming of plans for early acquisition of a specialized data processing system for servicing members requests.

Adaptations by the University

The activities described in preceding pages, while in some ways unique to the Institute for Social Research, are also similar to developments in other Universities and in other fields of science. Permanent and large-scale research organizations within universities have been established in many fields of science during the last two decades. This has created a number of problems, at Michigan as elsewhere, because the requirements of such organizations, whether located within teaching units or outside of them, are sometimes not well served by the traditional administrative processes of a university. For this reason, considerable strain has been associated with attempts to develop organizational structures, management processes, and institutional policies conducive to the growth and effective performance of such research units.

Universities historically have been oriented primarily towards teaching; research and other scholarly activities have been regarded as part-time tasks to be conducted by the teaching faculty in their free time. The accommodation of the requirements of semi-autonomous research organizations has come slowly and cautiously but, on the whole, in a sound manner. Progress in these adaptations has depended, first, upon acceptance of the full-time researcher and of the concept of the research team into legitimate partnership in the academic task. Secondly, it has depended upon a recognition that the requirements of a research organization are different in important ways from those oriented primarily toward teaching.

In the case of the Institute for Social Re-
search, the gradual acceptance of the legitimacy of the research staff member has come about with the passage of time. This process has been aided by the part-time participation of ISR staff members in teaching, by the concurrent engagement of some high-status teaching staff members into work schedules in which research is dominant, and by a growing realization of the interdependence of research and teaching at post-graduate levels. The progress of legitimation has been symbolized from time-to-time by formal changes in the faculty status of our staff members, beginning with such trivial matters as parking privilege and library usage, and later including provisions similar to or the same as those of the regular faculty with respect to economic security, retirement benefits, and periodic leaves of absence.

Certain strains have accompanied the incorporation of research staff into the University system, and some of these strains remain unresolved. For example, in some teaching units, the proportion of staff who have their major appointment outside of the unit has become rather large, with some corresponding threat of the diffusion of responsibility or the undue prominence of values and purposes other than those of teaching. Also, it is reasonable to expect that competition for qualified people and for funds may arise, although during the past period of rapid growth in both teaching and research this has not been a problem.

The mark of acceptance of the research staff member into the University community is seen in his inclusion in the general decision-making and policy-making apparatus of the University. ISR staff members have been encouraged to give their time and attention to such matters. Staff members have in fact occupied key non-research administrative and policy positions such as, for example, Coordinator of doctoral degree programs, Member of departmental Executive Committees, Chairman of the Faculty Senate, Member of the Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science and the Arts, and many others.

One major problem that remains, and which may be a matter of continuing concern in all universities, is the problem of providing an administrative and control structure for research that is compatible with, or at least in some reasonable balance with, the academic values of faculty freedom and autonomy. To enable an interdisciplinary research unit in a university to do creative research and to contribute fully to instructional activities related to its investigations, requires the establishment of a rather complex, multi-channeled influence and decision-making structure. The effective conduct of large-scale, team research within a university is at least as complex and difficult as the management of research and development in large governmental and business organizations. There is need for accepting the necessity and positive value of organizational structures and management processes of kinds not associated with the traditions of academia; in turn, protection for the values related to teaching and to the individual intellectual growth and performance of the faculty member must be maintained.
II. THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

STANLEY E. SEASHORE

The following section describes the internal organization and activities of the Institute. It begins with a brief overview of its formal organizational structure and staff composition, with some remarks on historic changes and trends. The main body of this statement will be directed toward some key issues bearing on the relationship between the research staff member and the institutional context in which he works. These issues are not unique but are those common to all organizations: control, role differentiation, coordination, goal setting, and the like.

Formal Structure and Staff

The Institute currently has on its staff about 50 professional researchers with doctoral degrees whose primary and continuing employment is with the Institute. These key people hold the principal directive, administrative, and research positions, and the work of the Institute is largely a reflection of their interdisciplinary interests and their ideas of what a social research institute should be. Of these people, about a third are disciplinary hybrids of the social-psychological strain, while most of the others can be readily identified as economists, sociologists, psychologists, political scientists, and the like. There are also representatives of mathematics, epidemiology, social work, and education. The staff is augmented by temporary alliances with senior scholars from various institutions and from complementary disciplines such as law, journalism, medicine, public health, psychiatry, and others.

Supporting this core professional staff are the following: (1) about 60 pre-doctoral research assistants, (2) about 50 persons with important but sub-professional technical skills and talents, (3) a secretarial-clerical force of about 40, (4) a permanent, part-time force of about 250 field interviewers resident in their respective communities across the nation and supervised by eight full-time field supervisors, and (5) a roster of experienced coders or content analysts available for part-time work as needed. During a typical month, about 450 names will appear on the payroll, representing actual manpower equal to about 275 full-time people.

The plan of organization combines some features drawn from academic traditions, and some that are less orthodox, drawn from the classical line-and-staff traditions of business and government. In general, those parts of the Institute that are concerned immediately with research activities tend toward the academic model, while those parts importantly concerned with external relations and institutional continuity tend toward the line-and-staff model. A form of functional supervision is used for some units; for example, interviewing and coding operations are under the methodological direction of their section heads and the content direction of the study director.

At the top of the organization is the office
of the Director, which includes staff units for accounting, central office services, computing and data processing services. Below the Director are three research divisions, the Survey Research Center, the Research Center for Group Dynamics, and the Center for Research on the Utilization of Scientific Knowledge, each headed by a Director. Each of the three Centers comprises a number of research programs, each program being headed by one or more Program Directors. In the case of the Survey Research Center, there are three additional service units (for sampling, field interviewing, and coding) available to any staff member in any Center whose research requires such specialized aid. These service units also conduct their own research programs on methodological problems.

The Program

It is at the level of the “program” that the organizational traditions of academia supersede those of administration. The program is in some ways an organizational anomaly unless viewed in terms of scholarly and academic criteria. The program has no fixed form of organization; it has fluid membership over time; it has substantial autonomy on most matters that are important to content-oriented researchers; it has continuity of existence based more upon evolving research interests than upon the necessities of the parent organization. Accordingly, the program units presently range in size from a solitary man pursuing his ideosyncratic interests to an assemblage of over 40 people sharing for a few years a joint and rather massive interdisciplinary field research effort. A staff member may be party to more than one program at the same time, may move from one program to another, and may create a new program of his own. Some programs are Hydra-like giants with two or three Program Directors sharing responsibility equally. Some programs have had a continuous lively existence for 18 years, while others have been inactive or new-born in recent years.

New inventions in programmatic form can and do arise within this system; the most notable recent cases being the “inter-center programs” (designed to join two Centers in common ventures) and an as yet nameless form under which research groups, not regularly on the Institute staff, may be attached to the Institute in a special status which makes available Institute resources but involves little Institute responsibility or control. An example of the latter kind is Professor Ronald Freedman’s series of studies of fertility and population growth, done largely within such an arrangement for the use of the Institute’s resources and facilities.

One should not over-emphasize the formlessness of the organizational unit called the “program,” for it has been developed purposely and has a rationale in other than formal structural terms. The object, of course, is to permit groups of scholars and their research assistants to form and re-form their relationships in ways appropriate to the current research task. The task is usually defined by the Program Director himself, or in some cases by a Study Director, and not by his organizational superiors. When the task is a long-term one of large scope (as in the Economic Behavior Program), there tends to arise a continuity of membership and a degree of task specialization designed to stress methodological continuity and long-range budgeting. When the task requires inter-disciplinary or methodological cooperation, it is possible to enlist such cooperation under any one of several alternative arrangements. The system is designed especially to achieve continuity and flexibility in those research activities that are larger in scope than can be handled by a single person, although usually a single person is in charge of each program and of each study. The presumed gain in personal effectiveness through this system is, of course, obtained at the risk of some loss of organizational control and Institute-wide coordination.
Coordination is sought through a system of overlapping group memberships coupled with decision-making rules that emphasize consultation and consensus.

That programmatic continuity and integration are possible under such an arrangement is amply demonstrated by the results so far. For example, Angus Campbell and his colleagues have conducted a series of studies that sum to a coherent view of the forces that shape the behavior of voters; Alvin Zander is completing the twelfth of a series of experiments concerning group goal setting and the nature of group goals; Ronald Lippitt and his colleagues conduct studies of juvenile delinquency with confident plans extending over many years; Dorwin Cartwright and Frank Harary have been engaged for over a decade in the development of graph theory and its applications in the behavioral sciences; George Katona and his colleagues have a history of eighteen years of coordinated study of economic attitudes and expectations.

Key Roles

The key roles within a program are those of the Program Director and the Study Director. The Program Director undertakes responsibility for planning and supervising research work with a special concern for achieving continuity and additivity in research over a span of several years. He must raise funds, appoint and train staff, procure and pay for extra-program staff services as they are needed, represent his program to sponsors and to the public, publish study findings, and periodically integrate the program results. Each of his studies is usually a separate venture financially, with its own budget and staff and its own predetermined life span. The Program Director is ordinarily involved deeply and personally in the conduct of this research, but may have general surveillance over allied studies in which he is not so heavily involved. Although time allocation varies widely according to program scope and personal preference, the Program Director typically spends about half of his time in personal research work, the other half being divided between related directive and administrative duties and duties related to the teaching functions of the University.

The product of the Institute is the sum of the products of the several programs and is evaluated in terms of the significance of the research, the scientific quality of publications, training in both disciplinary theory and research methods, and services to society and to professions of the kinds commonly provided by University faculty members. Services to other agencies are provided by the staff member as a representative of the Institute and not on a personal basis; full-time Institute staff members may not engage in private professional activities (particularly if they involve compensation) without the explicit consent of their colleagues, and this consent is rarely given. The staff members tend to emphasize research quality and output when appraising the Institute or themselves. This output consists mainly of books and research monographs, articles in scientific and professional journals, research documents prepared for distribution through channels other than journal subscription, manuals of research procedure and methodological assessment, and—perhaps most important—new PhDs of high research competence who are much in demand in the academic job market. Few people are aware of the range and volume of this output, as they usually see only that part that concerns their own discipline or interests.

Some History and Change

The two original centers—SRC and RCGD—have their historic roots extending well beyond the date of the formal creation of the Institute in 1946. Coming from different places and arising out of different purposes, they were initially rather disparate in theoretical
and methodological orientations. Over the intervening years their size and scope of interests have enlarged and there is presently considerable overlapping; this is reflected in their current ease in exchanging staff members and undertaking of occasional joint research ventures in the form of inter-center programs. The newly-formed center, CRUSK, came into being in 1964 with an initial staff transferred from the older centers along with their then ongoing research activities. Thus, the new center, while distinctly new and different in its research focus, represents also a continuity with and merging of earlier staff and research activities.

The size of the Institute, in numbers of people, has increased at a fairly regular rate, averaging about five percent per year in recent years. Growth has not been an explicit objective and, in fact, has at times been actively resisted on the grounds that there are impediments, as well as advantages, associated with larger size. However, research opportunities and external pressures have led to growth, and there is some feeling at present that further growth may be advantageous, perhaps even unavoidable, either by additions to regular staff or by the creation of new research groups.

The content of the research has broadened, but entirely within the definition of purposes originally laid down. All of the research, with very minor exceptions, concerns behavior in social contexts, with an emphasis on the use of contemporary data obtained directly from or about persons. The rule has been maintained that no research will be undertaken without assurance of freedom to publish the results of scientific value. There has been a deliberate effort to attain high competence in the methods of population surveys and the methods of experimentation with natural or laboratory groups and social systems.

During the early years there was a single-minded devotion to the internal affairs of the Institute, in order to establish firmly its autonomy and basic character. With time there has become a more relaxed view of this matter and a growing appreciation of the feasibility and merits of associations with other persons and organizations. The evidence of this lies in the establishment of many collaborative relationships with other research institutions, both domestic and foreign, the admission to staff status of scholars whose primary attachments are elsewhere, and a notable increase in the proportion of research that involves intimate collaboration with colleagues on the various Michigan faculties. Increasingly, the data archives of the Survey Research Center have been made available as a resource for researchers not on the Institute staff.

The "Study"

While the "program" is the central feature of the formal organization of the Institute, the "study" is the characteristic unit of work and the activity which the Institute is designed to bring into being and to sustain to completion. A "Study" is a unit of research work planned in advance as to objectives, method, and scope, with a predetermined life span, its own staff and budget. Many of the business procedures and operating policies of the Institute, as well as those of sponsors and of the University, combine to make the study a separate unit of activity.

The chief factors are economic. The Institute's income is primarily derived from current grants or contracts for the performance of specific research tasks. There is very little in the way of general purpose, sustaining funds available for allocation to research activities on a continuing basis. Each study must be financially viable, including the carrying of its share of the general overhead burden of the Institute. Accordingly, the accounts of income and expenditure are maintained by study. Appointments to staff are legally, under the rules of the University, contingent upon the availability of study funds. Contingencies arising during the course of a
study must be accommodated within its fixed budget. There is no general pool of funds to which salaries and other expenses may be charged, and each staff member accordingly charges his time—hour by hour—and his research expenses to specific, authorized study accounts. When a study budget is exhausted, it is necessary to cease expenditures or transfer staff and related costs to new studies or, in emergencies, to appeal to colleagues for an allocation of current overhead income from the small joint fund set aside each year for this purpose. Under these conditions, many of the recurring organizational crises concern the initiation of new studies and the successful termination of studies within their allotted time and budget.

The merit and necessity of this arrangement is that it puts the responsibility for both fund raising and for expense control squarely upon the shoulders of the staff member who initiates the study. He is free to plan ahead as he wishes, to seek funds according to his needs, and to spend his money, within some limits, largely as he sees best. The defects of this system are that firm planning for more than a year or so ahead is made difficult, that some opportunities for effective modifications of research plans are forfeited (e.g., following up on serendipitous leads or dropping relatively unprofitable inquiries), and that people who would prefer to be concentrating on research activities must divert some time to budgetary matters and fund raising. A serious need of the Program Director is for some longer-range financial support for programmatic activities that serve to integrate the separately funded projects.

A study may originate with a sponsor or with a staff member. About two-thirds of the studies come into being because a staff member conceives of some research that he wishes to do and then sets about to prepare a proposal and to seek out potential sources of support and, equally important, access to research sites and populations. A number of studies originate with a sponsor who comes to the Institute with a suggestion or a problem and succeeds in interesting a staff member in its research potential. Some excellent research plans go unfunded and undone for a time, and some studies get priority simply because sponsorship is more readily available. The mix of research at any one time is therefore never optimal; neither does it depart intolerably or for a long time from the primary content interests of the staff members. A prime factor in proposing or accepting any study is its potential for extending existing programmatic research plans or its potential for creating a new and needed program; studies are not isolated ventures, but part of some larger plan.

An average study has a duration of a year or so, and a budget of about $20,000 to $40,000. The range is great, however, in both time and cost. In some instances, several nominally separate small studies can be joined to make a more efficient larger total research activity, and in a number of cases there have been sequential studies with research plans and budgets reformulated annually. Usually, however, the Program Director has research support for only a year or two ahead, and he must constantly attend to the cycle of initiating and terminating studies. At any one time he is likely to have several studies in different stages, some in initial planning or proposal preparation, others in execution, and still others in the terminal phases of report preparation and the reallocation or reduction of staff.

A special case relating to the study system is that of the staff or service units of the organization. The Field Section, to take an example, provides field interviewing services for studies as needed, and compensation for this work must be incorporated in the original study budgets. A full complement of staff must be maintained in readiness for use, yet the Section is largely dependent for its income upon the regular initiation of survey studies by others. The result is that there are occasional periods of overload and occasional threats of
extended periods when there is no budgeted field work to be done. Accommodations to this situation take the forms of: (1) seeking grants for methodological research to be advanced during slack periods, (2) accepting occasional contracts for field work for other institutions, (3) planning a year or two in advance so as to schedule field work in a way to have a reasonable balance in the load of work throughout the period, and (4) absorption of any discrepancy between cost and income by allocations of current overhead income. The other service and staff units have a similar economic relationship to the several programs and studies.

These arrangements regarding programs and studies strike many people as being exceedingly strange. The businessman would think it imprudent to undertake overly large staff obligations with such uncertain sources of income and with such limited means for capitalizing the enterprise. Academics, accustomed to tenure and annual salary appropriations and in some cases to modest but dependable research aid funds, may wonder why a researcher would accept a system unless for reasons of sheer joy in entrepreneurial activity and dangerous economic living. The fact is, however, that the Institute has prospered under these arrangements and has not yet encountered any financial crisis sharp enough to threaten the organization or seriously to divert its research aims. While the Program Director may say, in a rueful spirit, that all he has is a desk, a phone, and a fund-raising license, he knows also that he has an effective system of mutual aid among colleagues and has the use of specialized resources for research that are not commonly available in the social sciences.

Some Processes of Organizational Life

The foregoing material provides a rough description of the Institute's staff and formal organizational plan together with a characterization of the "program" and the "study." We turn next to a description of procedures for handling certain recurrent problems that arise within such a system. Two out of many procedural and normative sub-systems will illustrate the Institute's characteristic approach to the resolution of organizational problems. As in most organizations, many of the key internal processes have to do with the reconciliation of the organization's needs with those of the individual member. The first example will concern the choice and initiation of research projects—a matter close to the heart of every dedicated scientist.

Project Selection and Authorization

For a new study to come into being, it is necessary that there be (1) a written proposal stating the objectives, scientific justification, methods, expected financial support, and proposed staff for the research, (2) consent from the senior staff of the Center in which the proposal originates, (3) consent from the Institute's Administrative Committee which consists of the Institute Director and the three Center Directors, (4) consent from the Institute's Executive Committee, the "outside" committee of University faculty administrative staff members appointed by the Board of Regents of the University, (5) confirmation from a sponsor or other fund source of their willingness to support the study, and (6) approval of the proposed budget and staff as to conformance with general University financial, legal, and personnel policies.

This sounds like a formidable array of obstacles for the researcher who just wants to get on with a little research. However, each step has its own sound logic and necessity, and any good bureaucrat would assert that these controls and coordinating steps, in the end, save time and trouble for the researcher. In any event, they are fairly painless, can be completed in a few days when necessary, and they rarely, except in the important case of
negotiations with the sponsor, involve any constraint on the theoretical or methodological aspects of the proposed work.

The practices of the Institute's Executive Committee illustrate this point. The members of this Committee are competent scholars and researchers in their own right and have ideas of their own about research priorities and methods. They also have a profound respect for the independence of the individual researcher. While they often make useful suggestions about the content, design, and strategy of a project proposal, they rarely activate their powers except on matters of general policy concerning the relationships of the Institute to the University and the public.

Similarly, the peers of a project proposer, meeting weekly in executive session, are qualified to speak critically about a research proposal and are authorized to veto it on grounds of scientific purpose, theory, or method. In fact this never occurs, as there is a mutual respect for diversity in research and a presumption that the proposer should be allowed to do almost anything he wishes, provided only that it will not interfere with others or harm the Institute. Accordingly, the review by peers with respect to the scientific character of a proposal tends to produce suggestions only; while on issues of business policy, public relations, priorities in the use of staff resources, and the like, the peer reviews result in firm, controlling decisions which may have the effect of altering or vetoing a proposal.

The restraint shown by these and other formally constituted review bodies in influencing the scientific character of research proposals is purposeful and quite striking in view of the fact that nearly all proposals involve issues of theory and method about which the people involved have strong personal views. But does this mean that the staff member is totally "free" to plan his work unhampered by precedent or by the views of his colleagues? Of course not. There are present strong forces upon the individual staff member, but they are of a permissive kind and are applied in ways that generally permit initiative and innovation on any scientific issue. These forces are embodied in: (1) a custom, although voluntary, favoring informal consultation with relevant colleagues during the formulation of a new research proposal and a strong norm that advice when sought must be given freely and seriously, (2) a knowledge that in the long run the individual's scientific performance will be assessed by his peers within the Institute and his career will be affected by this assessment, (3) a strong norm favoring the pursuit of programmatic goals using methods and theoretical tools that are compatible and additive between successive studies, and (4) periodic staff seminars in which research plans, results and theories are presented for critical review.

For these reasons, some outsiders, when reviewing the work of a given program, will be struck by the presence of recurring features of theory and design. The several projects obviously are not created independently of one another, even when created by different staff members. In the case of the Survey Research Center, there is the further factor that the survey method is uniquely powerful in descriptive and comparative studies, and therefore there is considerable scientific merit in maintaining a uniformity of method and of some of the content across a series of studies—for example, as in assessing time-series data on economic attitudes or in assembling, over a span of years, descriptive data for an array of contrasting examples of organizations assessed in all instances by compatible methods. In sum, there are strong forces upon the individual staff member arising partly from social constraints and partly from an awareness of the advantages of continuities in research programs, and these do produce a certain similarity in research proposals.

The question of how much continuity and conformity is optimum must remain an open one, probably best resolved through separate individual acts of deviance by staff members. That deviant and inventive patterns of re-
search are possible within the system is amply evident. To mention a few examples: (1) the Institute now has the use of a laboratory and technical assistance which will permit the analysis of physiological measures in conjunction with social and psychological variables; (2) some of the research departs from the institutional tradition of studying only people to the extent of dealing with the behavior of mathematical systems, pigeons, and computers; (3) the staff includes individuals identified with strongly contrasting theoretical orientations who are in open, but gentlemanly, theoretical contention; (4) there is no "official" theoretical system or singular roster of concepts and methods that characterizes the whole of the Institute; (5) entirely new research programs have been successfully launched within the last few years. While one might wish for more (or for less) conformity in research design and study selection, it is clear that the system provides for the accommodation of novel proposals, while at the same time encouraging continuities in research content and plan.

In some cases the chief factors in the determination of new study proposals lie outside of the Institute and not within its own internal system. Each project must engage the interest and financial resources of an outside sponsor. While a substantial portion of the Institute's income is from agencies whose purpose is to encourage new lines of research, an important part is from organizations whose research objectives and tolerances are determined by their own private or specialized interests. In such cases, the content and plan of the proposal must be some compromise or combination between the concerns of the Institute staff member and those of the sponsor. In many cases a study can be designed that represents an identity of interests; in others the study proposal will contain clear elements of incidental service which are provided only as a necessary condition for getting the opportunity to do related basic research of little or no interest to the sponsor. A typical example is the case in which access to a research site having properties of high theoretical or methodological interest is available only at the price of providing some related data gathering and reporting services for the sponsor. Many research opportunities are rejected on the grounds that the scientific potentialities of the proposed study are not great enough in relation to the total commitment of staff time and energy or because the sponsor's concerns impose intolerable limits on the scope or objectivity of the proposed study.

**Staff Recruitment and Development**

Our second example of organizational process concerns the recruitment and development of staff. This topic is chosen because, next only to project selection and initiation, the shifting composition of the staff is the most important indicator of past and future changes in the character of the Institute.

A person interested in possible employment with the Institute soon discovers an odd fact: the Institute has no central personnel officer and no formal means for recruitment or assignment of research staff members. He will probably have to contact several different people independently in order to find out what opportunities exist. Except for two classes of employees, it is up to each Program Director or staff unit head to determine his own requirements, to locate candidates, and to make employment commitments. The exceptions are (1) that the Institute Business Manager provides some placement coordination in the case of secretarial and clerical employees, and (2) any appointment to senior permanent rank is treated as a joint concern of the Program Directors and Center Directors. The first exception arises simply because of the volume of transactions involved; the second exception because senior appointments confer on the new person a share in the determination of policies for the Institute as a whole, and thus affect everyone. The great
majority of research appointments are made on the initiative and autonomous authority of the Program Director in connection with his planning and budgeting of new studies, although a good deal of informal help and consultation occurs. His only restrictions are those concerning conformance with general policies regarding titles, salaries, and benefits. This is not simply a matter of convenient delegation from higher authority but rather an expression of the principle that staff composition is a factor in research study choice and plan and, therefore, is to be exempted as much as possible from external controls.

**Staff Composition**

Some brief remarks were made earlier about the size and growth of the total staff. Here we will be concerned only with that segment of the staff that is directly concerned with the planning and control of the research process—namely the salaried people holding “research” rather than clerical or office service appointments. These can be considered in three categories: (1) the established professional people with doctoral degrees or some equivalent professional research competence, (2) the group of graduate student research assistants who are employed for the dual purpose of professional development and work performance, and (3) the sub-professional but skilled specialists and assistants in research.

The proportion of staff in each of these groups has increased about as follows during the last eight years: professionals, up 28 percent; student assistants, up 60 percent; and sub-professionals, up 300 percent. There are now relatively fewer chiefs and more Indians. The average staff and budget per professional staff member has risen rather sharply, with a particularly sharp increase in the proportion of staff composed of technical specialists and sub-professional assistants in research.

The implication of this continuing shift in staff composition as to rank lies in its message about the scope and technical complexity of the research that is being done. Compared with past years, our key people are becoming engaged in projects of larger scope and in kinds of research that permit or require the use of specialized people for the more complex and also the more routine chores of data-gathering and data-processing. The key staff member does more planning, supervising, analysis, and writing, and is in many cases less intimately involved in the mechanics of the research process. Some of the research procedures are becoming too complex or too uniquely standardized to be performed well by part-time graduate students of brief tenure, and some work formerly done by part-time students or by the professional person himself is gradually being transferred to permanent full-time non-professional staff members. Graduate students, in turn, tend less to be required to do routine, mechanical research tasks.

This transition parallels that of an earlier day in the biological and physical sciences where the role of the career laboratory technician is now well established. From the start, the Survey Research Center had special units for sampling and for field interviewing, largely because of the highly specialized competencies these activities entail. There has been added a permanent coding section which now is provided with supervision of high competence and status. Where each study staff formerly did much of their own work on simple IBM machines, there is now a separate staff of 20 people to perform sub-computer routines, to prepare programs and to provide counsel and service on computer usage. Project directors are learning to buy and rely upon specialized counsel and service of various kinds. The current step in this trend toward specialization of research functions is the creation of a class of Institute staff members to provide the special skills pertaining to the purposeful introduction and observation of research-related changes in larger social systems both in the field and in the laboratory.
The need for this is becoming clear; we have learned that the best researcher with respect to theory and methodological strategies may be, and often is, rather inadequate as an instrument of experimental change.

Diversification of Staff

Turning now to another aspect of staff recruitment and development, let us consider the pattern of additions to the ranks of permanent senior staff. Two trends are to be noted here. For the first ten years of the Institute's existence and growth, additions to permanent senior staff were exclusively accomplished by the retention and promotion of outstanding graduate student research assistants and of post-graduate fellows—that is, by promotion from within the organization. In contrast to this, nearly half—eight out of 17—of those given senior status during the past few years came from outside of the Institute staff. Furthermore, four of these eight represent a diversification of the research staff as they provide representation of additional fields or theoretical approaches.

The general picture, then, is one of moderate staff growth, a rapid rate of task specialization, and a definite increase in the openness of the senior ranks to diversified talents from outside sources. These changes have come about purposefully, for the most part, and have brought with them organizational stresses and advantages of various kinds.

Some Issues of Policy Concerning the Character of the Institute

In closing this account of the Institute for Social Research we mention a few of the dilemmas and issues that appear recurrently as the staff goes about its day-to-day work of conducting research and modifying the institutional context in which the research is done.

1. Training versus research. The Institute takes very seriously its self-imposed obligation to help the University provide advanced graduate and post-doctoral training. From the start staff members, at the request of the instructional branches of the University, have taught advanced courses and seminars, with an emphasis on methodology and on theoretical issues embodied in current Institute research. Currently 30 members of the Institute staff are teaching in one or more departments and about 60 graduate students are employed on research projects with the dual aim of advancing the research and gaining research experience. The Institute has an explicit written policy declaring that the research study needs have priority and that student training is to be provided to the extent possible in ways compatible with the efficient and economical conduct of the research. Yet the frequency with which this policy statement is invoked testifies that the statement only names the problem and does not solve it. Some students, and some staff members also, often and deliberately act as though training goals have priority. The dilemma, of course, is in finding some balance between training objectives and efficient performance of research, and we have found no general solution to this dilemma. The issue becomes very concrete in the decisions made daily by a study director. Shall he employ a first-year student who has much to learn or a third-year student who has much to give to the study? When is he justified in assigning a student to a critical and irrevocable task for which the sponsor has every right to expect a fully competent professional performance? Shall he divert study funds to support a thesis analysis that is marginal to the main objectives of the study? What portion of his own time can be reasonably given to the coaching and counseling of student assistants? In general, an attempt is made to see that each student assistant gets exposed to a wide range of research problems and activities, but budgetary and schedule factors often interfere with this. A recent survey of graduate students indicates that those employed at the Institute
are equally or more satisfied with their training than those employed elsewhere at Michigan, yet instances of dissatisfaction do occur.

2. Personal versus institutional interests. It is perhaps inevitable that an institutional entity should come to have obligations and needs that are not compatible with the short-run interests of the members. In our case, this dilemma turns up in many ways, one being in the case of a request from outside of the Institute (often from a public organization) for research of some kind that is evidently worth doing in its own right but not of a kind that matches the current preoccupations of any staff member. These cases are handled as they arise, sometimes by locating some other person or institution that more appropriately can do the work, sometimes by adding temporary staff for the work, sometimes by diverting some of our staff members, and sometimes and with increasing frequency, by reluctantly admitting that we do not have the staff resources to undertake it.

3. Methodological control versus scientific freedom. It is an explicit objective of the Institute to seek to achieve and maintain the highest standards of methodological excellence—for example, sampling procedures, field interviewing and questionnaire construction, laboratory experimental procedures, and the like. For some of these functions there are special staff units headed by professional persons who feel strongly that they must press toward improved practice, yet are restrained by the academic norm of independence for the study director. Study directors, in turn, can be ingenious in thinking up reasons why they should, in some particular instance, be exempted from using the best (and usually more time-consuming and costly) methods. This is a version of the familiar line-versus-staff conflict that plagues all formal organizations, and the Institute is not an exception. In the end, the study director is influenced most by considered scholarly criticism of his research product, both by his own colleagues and by others in his field of specialization.

4. Research versus application. On the whole, the Institute is not disturbed by controversy over the merits of “basic” versus “applied” research, for the reason that this dichotomy is not thought to be a useful one, and for the reason that preference is given explicitly to research programs which in some fashion join theory development with issues of societal effectiveness and human values. It is true, of course, that some projects have a high potential for practical applications, and that others are quite remote indeed from any intentions to apply the result. The dilemma, therefore, occurs to us in a somewhat different form than is traditional in the social sciences. The problem is not how to achieve scientific detachment and moral neutrality, but rather how, more effectively, to achieve an interaction between theory and scientific method on the one hand, and social and human problems on the other, so that both come to be understood better. We are intrigued by the fact that some of our disciplinary colleagues think us much too applied in orientation, while at the same time our sponsors and the general public usually think us much too preoccupied with abstractions and generalizations. The foregoing characterization of the Institute as a whole does some injustice to individual staff members, for there is a diversity of views and actions. Some staff members hold that scientific achievement is likely to be greater if the researcher is insulated from issues of human and social value and from the impertinence of sponsors; these staff members tend to choose research problems and sponsors accordingly. Others feel that their scientific goals are advanced through a continuing, intimate, personal exposure to social phenomena in their natural state and that other people's values and goals are a part of the totality they wish to understand. Still others divide their lives so that some parts of their work are explicitly designed to be “basic” and others are designed, equally explicitly, to be attempts at exposing their ideas to the hard test of social transmission and application.
5. Specialization versus diversification. The Institute began as a relatively focused research venture both in terms of methodology and range of content interest, and deliberately over a span of years sought to achieve a competence and reputation as a specialized institution. This policy no doubt had a crucial survival value for a venture which for several years had problems with regard to its economic viability and of its role within the University. With the maturing of its key staff and of its institutional character there has come a blurring of its boundaries, both as to definition of scope of acceptable work and as to its receptivity to external influences. The trends have already been mentioned toward staff diversification, establishment of dependency relations with other parts of the University and with other institutions, and the Institute’s alliances with persons and research groups whose primary institutional attachments are elsewhere. These changes will inevitably raise serious problems of formal organizational structure and process, and it is not likely that the present highly satisfactory arrangements will continue to be appropriate. Examples of the issues that are bound to arise are these: How much influence, if any, should the Institute have on the methodological decisions of research groups allied, but not fully incorporated, within the Institute? What coordinating or control system can be invented to prevent destructive competition between parts of the Institute with respect to content areas or fund sources? How can the business policies and personnel policies of the Institute (for example, tenure, salary levels, proscription of private professional practice) be loosened to accommodate the varied practices of allied organizations? At what points will the research activities of the Institute approach the boundaries of the legitimate concerns of a public university, and how shall the limits be determined? How can the principle of policy decision by peer consent be maintained if the professional staff becomes more unwieldy in size? Will the multiple overlapping group form of an organization be adequate? What alternative process for policy decision and peer influence would be effective, and yet acceptable to researchers who value highly their academic traditions? These are interesting and challenging questions which will have to be resolved in some fashion which preserves institutional integrity while still permitting adaptation to changing needs and circumstances.

A Concluding Note

Many of the points made in this paper can be integrated within a single broad issue. The chief problem of the Institute as an organization has been, and continues to be, the search for ways to sustain an enterprise which at the same time must satisfy high scholarly and academic values and also remain economically viable without assured patronage or public support. It is no novelty to observe that the boundaries between science and society-at-large are becoming permeable. Important basic social and behavioral research is conducted entirely outside of the ivied halls; many social scientists split their lives and careers between the academic and the so-called “real world of affairs” and apparently do not find the values or conditions of life too discrepant. The history of the Institute for Social Research can be viewed as being an emergent at the institutional level, parallel to the new role for the social scientist that is already well established at the individual level.