

Survey Research Center

SRC Project Growth

Income from Projects

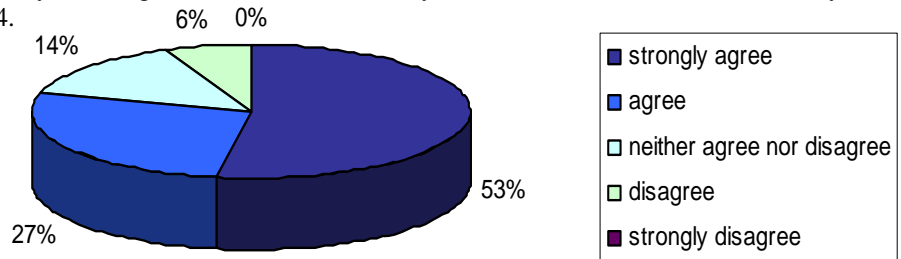
2003-04: \$ 853,402

2004-05: \$ 1,326,154

During the FY 2004-05, the Survey Research Center (SRC) was involved with 110 different research projects. Of these, 74 were active or completed.

Researchers Believe that the SRC Enhances their Research

80% of SRC clients indicate agreement that *because the SRC is available to them at Penn State, they were able to enhance their research beyond what would have been possible without the SRC's services* (53% strongly agree and 27% agree—see chart below). These results come from the April 2005 survey of the SRC's past and present clients. The survey was carried out by the University of Georgia to assure confidentiality. For more information on this survey, turn to page 4.



Spotlight on Research

See page 3

Developing New capacities

From the Director

The Survey Research Center is nearing the end of its fifth year of operation. In this period of time the Center went from two employees to over 17 full time staff persons and nearly 100 part time workers, and we have provided research services to faculty in over 30 departments in the Penn State system, as well as several external clients. Since inception, our focus has been on providing research services to Penn State researchers and they have accounted for over 95 percent of our clients. Meeting their needs has led us to develop expertise in a wide variety of survey methods including administering questionnaires to students in schools in the state, conducting a national telephone survey, preparing machine-readable questionnaires for mailing to research participants, hosting and setting up web-based surveys, and con-

ducting interviews in people's homes. As we move into our sixth year we will continue to monitor developments in methods and technology to insure that we provide our clients with cutting edge services to keep social science researchers at Penn State in the lead in the increasingly competitive search for research funding. We believe we are well positioned to do this and have benefited from the strong support we have had from SSRI, the Office of the Vice President for Research, and from researchers at Penn State.

The SRC is experiencing personnel changes in several of our key administrative positions. We recently had a change at the Assistant Director position and our Faculty Research Associate, Brian Grim, who works with many of you to prepare cost esti-

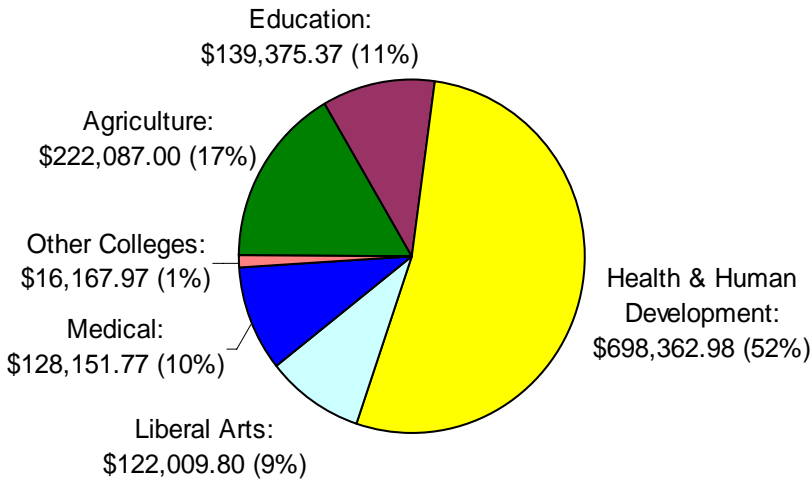
mates and consult on survey design is departing this summer. At the end of the fifth year, I plan to step down as Director of the SRC and return to full time research and teaching in the Sociology Department. A search is currently in progress for a new Director. We fully expect these transitions to occur smoothly and are confident that we will continue to provide timely and high quality services to our clients.



David R. Johnson
Director

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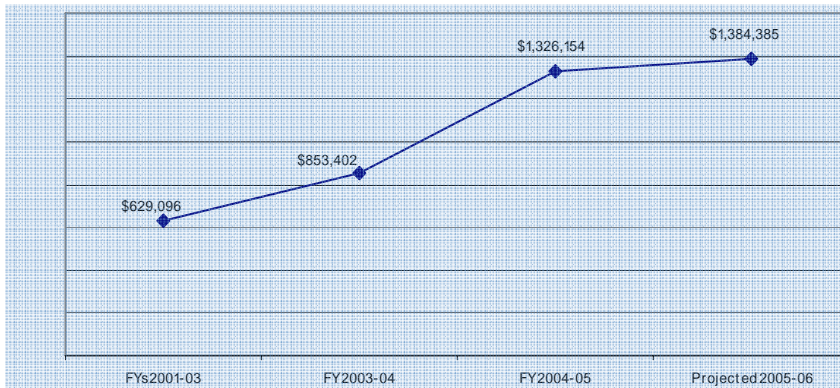


SRC's income by College served (FY 2004-05)

Serving Penn State Colleges

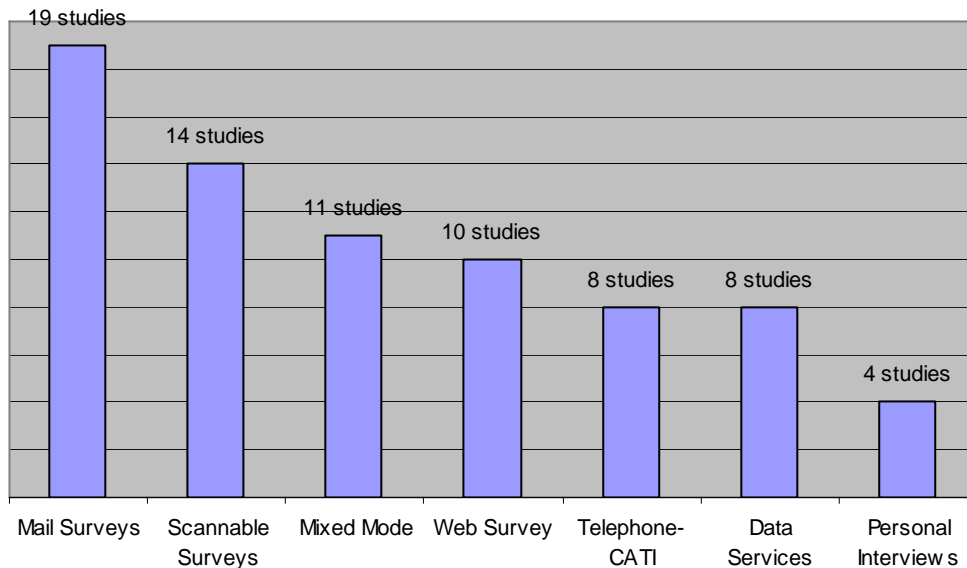
Approximately half of the SRC's work is done for the colleges of Agriculture, Education, Liberal Arts and Medicine. The remaining (52%) of the SRC's work is for the college of Health and Human Development. These are the five colleges represented on the SSRI's Executive Committee.

Dollars of service is related to but different from the numbers of projects facilitated. From its inception through the end of FY 2004-05, the SRC facilitated 175 projects: 39 projects for the College of Agriculture (22%), 15 for Education (9%), 61 for Health and Human Development (35%), 28 for The Liberal Arts (16%), and 8 for the College of Medicine (5%). 24 projects were facilitated for other Penn State colleges/units (14%).



Growth Projected to Level Off

The SRC's income reflects its growth in active and completed projects. After several years of sustained increase, the income from projects facilitated by the SRC is leveling off. This leveling-off was part of the SRC's strategic long range plan. Future growth will be determined by the types of research initiated by Penn State researchers.



Multiple Modes

The SRC had 74 active research projects in the 2004-05 fiscal year. This research is supported by four work divisions: mail, telephone, field, and web.

The size of these projects varied immensely. For example, our personal interview projects include interviews of more than 6000 school students, and hundreds of families and community leaders.

As response rates decline, many researchers use multiple modes of data collection in order to increase responses.

National and Multi-site Research on Infertility

The Family Choices Study is a multi-institution project funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Development that seeks to explore the types of issues faced by women and families when confronted with infertility and the inability to have the children they desire. Factors that account for why some women seek help for infertility problems and some don't is also a focus of the study. David R. Johnson is the principal investigator of the study which is a col-

laboration with other researchers at Penn State, the University of Nebraska, Alfred University, and the University



of Connecticut. The SRC at Penn State and the Bureau of Sociological Research at the University

of Nebraska will conduct over 5,000 telephone interviews for the survey. The RDD sample used in the study is nationally representative of women aged 25-45 with oversampling of minority women. In many of the households, interviews are conducted both with the woman and her partner. Data collection on the project will continue for the next three years.

An important characteristic of the SRC is its collaborative work with major funding agencies and other institutional partners in national research.

PDA's: Technology Under Development

The SRC is in the process of testing PDA technology to collect survey data. Using Perseus© software on the PDA's, interviewers will be able to complete surveys in the field. The interviewer can then perform a hot-sync operation to upload the data. Once the hot-sync operation

has been performed, the data is cleared from the PDA, thereby eliminating the threat to confidentiality so long as the hot-sync operation is performed for each respondent. The use of PDA technology for survey research offers the advantage of eliminating the costs of paper and

survey scanning. Additionally, the Perseus© software allows the data to be easily imported into SPSS or other statistical software packages.

Though still under development, PDA survey technology may provide quick and cost effective data collection.



SRC is working on developing PDA survey capacities for clients

Adoptive Families Project

The Adoptive Families Project, under the direction of Janet Welsh, is a study of U.S. families adopting children from non-U.S. countries. Data collection focuses on pre-adoption and post-adoption experiences, family and community characteristics, and par-

enting expectations. Currently, over 200 families are participating in the study by completing a pre-adoption survey and two post-adoption surveys at 6 and 12 months after their child is in the home. Families are also providing information that per-

tains to their child's level of development to better understand characteristics of the adopted children. The SRC is administering the surveys and monitoring the data collection. Data collection began in early 2005 and will continue into 2007.



Survey Research Center

Contacts & Budget Estimates

The Survey Research Center provides state-of-the-art and cost-effective survey research services to Penn State faculty and administrative units. The Survey Research Center operates on a fee-for-service basis. Project cost estimates are gladly provided upon request.

Administrative Offices

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www.ssri.psu.edu/survey/

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State College, PA 16801

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Fax: 814-861-5439

Training in Survey Methodology

The SRC's Director offers an advanced sociology graduate course on survey methodology, and a certificate program in survey methodology is being developed. The Survey Research Center offers workshops, internships and other training opportunities for the Penn State research community. Online versions of workshops are at the SRC's website:

<http://www.ssri.psu.edu/survey/educ.htm>

Services Provided

- Self-Administered & Mail Surveys
- Scannable Paper Surveys
- Telephone Surveys (CATI)
- Person to Person Data Collection (CAPI, etc.)
- Focus Groups for Academic Research
- Web Surveys
- School Surveys with all ages

The SRC External Review and Client Satisfaction Survey

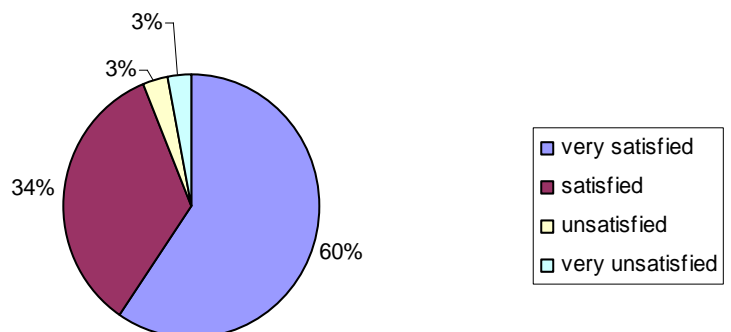
In an effort to assess the progress and performance of the SRC over the last four years, an external review and a client satisfaction survey were conducted in the Spring of 2005. The University of Georgia's Survey Research Center conducted the client satisfaction survey. Email invitations to participate were sent to 200 valid email addresses of SRC clients, and 79 people responded by completing the web survey.

Over 93% of those responding indicated that they were either very satisfied (60%) or satisfied (34%) with the contribution of the SRC to their research project (see chart to the right). When asked to respond to their agreement with the following statement "Because of the SRC was available to me at Penn State, I was able to enhance my research beyond what would have been possible without the availability of SRC services," 53% strong agreed and 27% agreed (see page 1).

A full report of the survey results is available upon request.

Three directors of academic survey research centers at major research universities conducted a site visit and review of the SRC. The findings of the external reviewers also pointed to the value of the SRC to the Penn State research community, writing in their report that "...its exceptional early success and its contribution to Penn State's research community impressed us deeply."

Overall, how satisfied are you with the contribution of the SRC to your research project?



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