

News of the Profession

Reports

State Legislative Electoral Data Project

Malcolm E. Jewell
University of Kentucky

The National Science Foundation has funded a project to develop a major collection of research data for the study of the electoral and governmental processes of the American states. The project will be carried out by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan. The ICPSR will collect comprehensive data for the 1968-86 period in three areas: (1) state legislative general election returns in 50 states; (2) legislative primary elections in 16 southern and border states; and (3) basic data on voter registration for all states having statewide registration.

The ICPSR will create computer-readable data sets in these three areas, to facilitate statistical analysis. The collection will also be linked to computer-readable returns for elections to the offices of President, U.S. Senator and Representative, and Governor. The data sets will be made available to the scholarly community through the normal ICPSR channels. Once this project is completed, the ICPSR will routinely add the new legislative election and registration data to the file every two years.

The project will be directed by Jerome E. Clubb, Executive Director, and Erik Austin, Director of Archival Development at the ICPSR. Malcolm E. Jewell of the University of Kentucky will serve as principal adviser for the project and will chair a steering committee, consisting of

William H. Flanigan (University of Minnesota), Samuel C. Patterson (Ohio State University), and Ronald E. Weber (Louisiana State University). The committee will help to locate fugitive data and provide advice on designing data formats and documentation and integrating these data files with other electoral data in the ICPSR files. The committee will also be responsible for organizing a conference utilizing the legislative election data in the fall of 1989.

At its initial meeting in June, the steering committee established priorities for collecting data and developing the files. Much of the data, particularly for legislative general elections, are already available in paper records at the ICPSR. One of the first steps in the project will be to track down missing election returns, particularly for southern and border state primaries, and to fill in remaining gaps in voting registration data.

Legislative General Election Data

The first priority in preparing data files will be legislative general elections for the 50 states. One state at a time will be completed for the entire 1968-86 period, beginning with 15 states that used single-member districts exclusively throughout the period. The plan is to release the data set for these 15 states as soon as it is completed, presumably in the spring of 1988, with the expectation that the data sets for the remaining states will be completed by the spring of 1989.

Legislative election data will be recorded at both the district and county level in multi-county districts. There will be three types of data files: a basic file that shows the vote by district and by counties within a district; a candidate/district file

providing complete information on each district election and including information on the incumbency status of candidates; and a county file, to facilitate comparison with other types of data. Organization of the data will be similar to that for ICPSR files on congressional districts, although the inclusion of multimember districts will cause some differences. Because statewide and congressional election returns, registration data, and census data are not usually available at the legislative district level, the county file will be most useful for comparing legislative elections with these data.

Southern Legislative Primary Election Data

The second priority will be to prepare data files on primary elections in southern and border states for the same time period. This includes the 11 traditional southern states, plus West Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, and Oklahoma. These states were chosen because they are the ones where primary elections are most likely to be decisive. It is not financially possible to compile primary election data for all states at the present time. There are likely to be some gaps in the data that are available for some of these southern and border states, particularly for the earlier period. It is hoped that the primary election data files can be released by the spring or summer of 1989.

The primary election data files will differ in several respects from the general election files. There will be a basic file on the vote by district and candidate as well as a candidate/district file; but there will not be a county file because there is less reason to compare legislative primary results with those for other races. Data on incumbency status will be recorded. The data will include runoff elections where these occur. One other difference is that many states do not record results or even hold primaries when there is no contest.

Voting Registration Data

The third priority is development of a computer-readable file on voter registra-

tion at the state and county levels for each state on a periodic basis for the period from 1968 to date. It will include total registration, as well as registration for each major party and for minor parties, and nonparty. Other breakdowns of registration data (such as race and sex) will be recorded where they are available. State level and often county level registration data for the most recent years are readily available, and in many cases are already in the paper files of the ICPSR. Early in the project, efforts will be made to collect the missing data from state governments and political parties. There is no target date yet for release of these data sets.

Conference on State Legislative Elections

The steering committee will organize a conference on state legislative elections, to stimulate research utilizing the newly acquired data files. It is scheduled for the fall of 1989 at the University of Kentucky. It is anticipated that the data sets on the legislative election returns will be completed and available for distribution by the summer of 1989.

Information on the availability of these data sets will be published in the *ICPSR Bulletin*. Sessions will be scheduled at both the Midwest and the APSA meetings in 1988 to provide more information about the project and the data sets. At the appropriate time, an announcement will be sent out describing the available legislative election data in greater detail and inviting scholars to submit proposals for papers to be delivered at the conference.

The steering committee has developed a preliminary list of topics for papers that might be included in the conference. It is intended to be suggestive rather than to discourage other proposed topics. The list of proposed topics follows:

The growth of two-party competition in southern states, as measured by the frequency and closeness of legislative contests; and patterns of competition in northern states.

A study of incumbency advantage in

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legislative races, with comparisons over time and among states.

The effects of presidential and gubernatorial coattails in legislative races.

A study of the causes of divided partisan control over the legislative houses and the governorship.

The effects of single- and multi-member districts on party competition.

Variation in seats-votes ratios in state legislatures.

The effects of legislative reapportionment on party competition.

Case studies of the effects of campaign spending, along with other variables, on the outcome of legislative elections.

Variables affecting variation in legislative turnover, including variations among state and by election schedule.

A study of variations in Democratic primary competition in southern states, emphasizing differences among states and the effects of incumbency.

Trends in turnout in southern legislative primaries. □

from anywhere in the world. The award will be \$ 150,000.

Purpose

The purpose of the award is to stimulate the dissemination and critical analysis of outstanding proposals for the improvement of relations between nations. Submissions for the award may address a wide range of international concern such as foreign policy and its formation, the conduct of foreign relations, intercultural relations and communications, international law and organization, the *rule of law* and the *role of force*, international development, and international trade and investment; any combination or particular aspect of these; or any idea which could at least incrementally lead to more just and peaceful international relations. The sponsors stress that, in addition to originality, judges may consider the feasibility and potential impact of submissions.

Administration

1. The University Committee overseeing the award invites nominations from throughout the world by individual political scientists expert in the area, by professional associations of political scientists or related disciplines in international relations, by university presidents or by publishers and editors of journals and books in political science and international affairs. Self-nominations will not be accepted or considered.

2. Each nomination must be submitted in four clear copies. Submissions in a language other than English must be accompanied by competent English translations. *The nominator* will set out briefly the significance of the nomination and why it is presumed worthy of the award. The submission will include a complete description of the date and format of publication of the idea and a description of the author(s) of the published concept. Publication will be considered to be not only printed books and articles in scholarly or distinguished journals but public speeches, "white papers," or other widely and publicly dis-

Announcements

Grawemeyer Award for Ideas Improving World Order Is Established

International Competition

The University of Louisville is pleased to announce the first annual competition for the best idea promoting improved relations between nations published or presented in the last five years, 1983-87. The university is able to provide the award as a result of the creative generosity of H. Charles Grawemeyer. The idea deemed most useful and well articulated may have an individual author or authors, or may be the product of an institution or agency, and the ideas may be submitted

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