A. MISSION AND AREAS OF FOCUS

The primary purpose of the Institute for Public Opinion Research is to advance understanding of public opinion through education and research. Education is provided for directly with the instruction of students, by conducting seminars, and through scholarly publications; and indirectly through the dissemination of the results of public opinion polls. Research is performed to inform on specific issues of public opinion and also on public opinion theory and methodology.

B. ORGANIZATION, EXTERNAL TRENDS AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1. Organizational Issues

   a) See SJMC organizational chart (SEE APPENDIX A).

   b) IPOR is moving to a new space in the Hospitality Management Building at the Biscayne Bay Campus. This space will have adequate office space for IPOR’s full-time staff and enable an increase in CATI (computer-assisted telephone interview) interviewer stations from the current 16 to 25 as soon as new computers and software licenses can be purchased with funds from current externally funded projects as included in their budgets. This increase in capacity is important because IPOR is getting more projects than it can schedule at the current capacity and has had to turn some proposals down that were not from FIU units.

   c) Over the past three years two key IPOR staff have left for positions elsewhere. One position is that of associate director and the other is system programmer. The current director and assistant director have taken over the programming, statistical analysis and report writing tasks of the staff who left, assisted by personnel hired on a part-time and contract basis. For AY 2001-2002 this arrangement will continue. IPOR will not be hiring a replacement for the associate director since assistant director Ann Goraczko is managing most of the activities of that position. As a result she will assume the title of associate director. The position of interview supervisor is now filled by a person paid through OPS. That position is a critical one for IPOR and needs to become a 12-month position with benefits funded by IPOR’s external grant income. This will be done this fall.

2. Advisory Board Members

   Current advisory board members are as of Summer 2001: Mary Levitt, Psychology; Walter Peacock, Sociology/Anthropology; Howard Frank, CUPA; Milan Dluhy, Institute of Government; and Lisandro Perez, Sociology/Anthropology. Dluhy has taken a position at another university; the IPOR director and assistant director have been meeting with the other members of the advisory board on an informal basis. This year the membership of the board will be changed somewhat to reflect IPOR’s current primary task areas and ongoing collaboration with FIU research areas such as environmental research and transportation research (among others).
3. External Trends
Advances in phone technology make available to consumers increasing capability to screen calls. As "caller ID" and other screening systems continue to develop, pollsters may experience important declines in cooperation rates. At the same time, the demand for public opinion information coming from the media, private organizations, and government continues to grow. To deal with these changes, new approaches to data gathering are being devised at IPOR. Some of these involve making surveys more efficient, focused, short and interesting for respondents. Others involve using GIS to precisely target samples to areas where particular issues are of concern to people. Multiple ways of collecting data, including via the Internet, are being developed.

4. Strategic Directions and Areas of Emphasis
IPOR staff and facilities provide essential research assets in three areas: public opinion research, data services, and education. In the next five years we expect considerable growth at IPOR in each of these areas, with IPOR becoming fully self-supporting and playing a significant role in research education at FIU.

IPOR's public opinion survey operations are growing at a consistent and significant pace. Increased numbers of contacts, both with outside sources and with other researchers at FIU, are providing IPOR with more than enough work for its present staffing. There is every reason to expect these operations will continue to grow and to provide funds that will sustain the present survey staff as well as providing for additional staff as the workload increases.

IPOR is also rapidly widening the scope of its data services. As well as its main mission of survey research IPOR is increasingly being called on to provide statistical analysis, GIS mapping and other types of data work both in conjunction with and in addition to doing surveys. This is a highly value-additive role for IPOR in the overall context of research at FIU. IPOR now has a central role in FIU's research on the human dimensions of the environment, a continuing participation in hurricane/disaster and urban systems research, and new projects requiring GIS-based sampling methods in research on health issues and immigration to South Florida. These activities are currently the fastest growing area of IPOR, and additional staffing is already being employed on a project-by-project basis. As IPOR and FIU continue the expansion of research operations, IPOR's role in University research should grow considerably.

Over the past two years, IPOR staff and facilities have been increasingly utilized for research methodology instruction and graduate education. Taught by IPOR's director and other faculty, several courses at the graduate level have relied heavily on IPOR expertise and facilities. IPOR supported two graduate assistantships in AY 1999-2000 and one in AY 2000-2001. It also provided support for a number of other undergraduate and graduate students working as interviewers over the summer. IPOR's director was the committee chair of two graduate students who received their Ph.D.'s in 2000-2001, is the chair of two current Ph.D. dissertation committees, and is a member of many other thesis and dissertation committees. These activities provide a way to channel IPOR's research expertise into FIU Ph.D. graduation rates.

C. 2000-2001 ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goal 1: (Addresses University Goal G.V Ranking / Research I)
Enable FIU to bring in $500,000 in contracts/grants having IPOR survey component.
Work with entities like LACC institutes, the Metro Center and the Human Dimension of the of the South Florida Environment Group to develop new research proposals and new ways to augment their ability to obtain research grants.

**Assessment Criteria (Measurable Outcome):**
Amount of contracts/grants having IPOR survey component received by FIU.

**Accomplishment:**
Grants to FIU units for projects having an essential IPOR component in this AY totaled over $1.7 million. IPOR’s collaboration with other units in the Human Dimensions of the Environment has lead to development of a number of proposals and the funding of a project (under Arts and Sciences) that will develop a long-term collaboration with agencies involved with Everglades restoration. IPOR’s collaboration with disaster researchers at FIU (including the International Hurricane Center)

**Use of Results for Program Improvement:**
Projects expanded IPOR’s area of cooperation with other units at FIU and methodological expertise, particularly in the use of GIS for sample design and community-level data analysis.

**Goal 2: (Addresses University Goal G.II Research & Creative Activities)**
CONTINUE AND EXPAND THE FIU/FLORIDA POLL PROJECT: Since 1988, IPOR has conducted Florida’s most comprehensive statewide poll. Efforts to make this data useful to decision makers, educators, and the general public have been ongoing. With new efforts in this area, we expect to see the use of this data expand considerably in the years to come.

2000 FIU/Florida Poll results will be on the web immediately prior to the November elections.

Web interface for the poll data will be improved so it will be a major information source on public opinion about the issues that were important in the election year and for the new Federal administration.

**Assessment Criteria (Measurable Outcome):**
Subtask completion

**Accomplishment:**
2000 FIU/Florida Poll results were posted on the web immediately prior to the November elections, and became a valuable resource during the ensuing election drama in Florida. Results of the FIU/Cuba Poll are also on the web site and have been widely cited in the media.

**Use of Results for Program Improvement**
Continued increasing IPOR’s expertise in getting useful data on the web in a timely manner. IPOR’s web site has greatly increased IPOR’s communication with researchers inside and outside of FIU thus facilitating proposal development.

**Goal 3: (Addresses University Goal G.IV Strategic Themes, and G.V Ranking / Research I )**
BECOME FULLY SELF-SUSTAINING: Through survey research and data services operations, IPOR will become fully self-sustaining. IPOR is already providing for all of its equipment needs and will be able to provide for staffing costs on an increasing basis. This funding will come primarily from contracts and grants for survey and data services.

Search for and hire an associate director who will lead IPOR’s efforts to seek additional C&G contracts, either directly or in cooperation with other units at FIU.

Move to a new location with more space to enable higher productivity

**Assessment Criteria (Measurable Outcome):**
Measure equipment and staff in place

**Accomplishment:**
Measure equipment and staff in place
Thanks to the efforts of IPOR’s current staff, IPOR is fully scheduled with projects for 2001-2002, so a person will not be needed to seek additional contracts.

IPOR will be moved to its new location by August 20, 2001 (see above)

**Use of Results for Program Improvement**

Achieved greater efficiencies in use of staff time and a substantial increase in future income to support the infrastructure needed for higher productivity.

**Goal 4: (Addresses Goal G.IV Strategic Themes, and G.V Ranking / Research I, and T.V. Information)**

EXPAND LINKAGES TO MEDIA: These linkages, in addition to helping to inform the public about public opinion, enhance IPOR’s and FIU’s visibility and research reputation in Florida and in the nation.

Complete FIU/Florida Poll book. Begin a reorganization of FIU/Florida Poll to generate media coverage throughout the year, while maintaining the ability to measure annual longitudinal trends.

**Assessment Criteria (Measurable Outcome):**

Measure progress on book and number of cooperative arrangements

**Accomplishment:**

FIU continued to receive media coverage due to the FIU/Florida Poll and other surveys (Cuba Poll, Hurricane Research). The FIU/Florida Poll book was not completed, however.

**Use of Results for Program Improvement**

Learned more about collaborating with media via the website.

**Goal 5: (Addresses University Goal G. III. Applied Problem Solving)**

DEVELOP LOCAL AREA RESEARCH STUDIES. South Florida is a unique setting where a large variety of economic, demographic, ethnic, and international forces affect the dynamics of the urban regional system. A fragile ecosystem and frequent hurricanes also shape and constrain the development of the urban area. A large elderly population and large scale immigration put pressures on the health care system. All these are topics that require extensive survey research to study. Begin to develop a FIU/Metro Poll that addresses SE Florida issues, generates media coverage, and offer state and local agencies a means to conduct small scale surveys in Dade and Broward Counties. Continue to concentrate on issues important to South Florida, including developing survey projects specifically tied to environmental and urban issues.

**Assessment Criteria (Measurable Outcome):**

Identify and count relevant projects

**Accomplishment:**

IPOR did not have the opportunity to start an FIU/Metro Poll but discussions have been initiated with FIU’s Metro Center on the topic. The major area of increase effort for local research by IPOR in 2000-2001 has been on local environmental research issues.

**Use of Results for Program Improvement**

New collaborations with researcher working in the Southeast Florida area, inside and outside of FIU

**Goal 6: (Addresses University Goal G. I. Well Educated Students)**

EXPAND ROLE IN RESEARCH METHODOLOGY EDUCATION through support for SJMC research methodology courses and programs, other FIU department research education efforts, and for individual student thesis and dissertation projects.

Teach full course for SJMC students. Expand coverage of SOC/ANT course to serve Environmental Sciences graduate students. Acquire GIS software for all machines and upgrade two remaining computers. Work with other departments to gain visibility and use for new lab.

**Assessment Criteria (Measurable Outcome):**
Count actual involvement in courses and other instructional activity. Measure technical component installation.  

**Accomplishment:**  
IPOR no longer has the staff to teach a full course for SJMC as was done a few years ago; IPOR continues to give lectures in SJMC classes as requested.  

Students in environmental studies and business are taking Gladwin’s research methods course. IPOR’s director was the committee chair of two graduate students who received their Ph.D’s in 2000-2001, is the chair of two current Ph.D. dissertation committees, and is a member of many other thesis and dissertation committees.  

**Use of Results for Program Improvement**  
Communication with faculty and students from SJMC and other departments to find ways IPOR can enhance educational activity given its limited staff availability  

**Goal 7:** (Addresses University Goal G. III. Applied Problem Solving)  
INCREASE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS ON PUBLIC OPINION METHODOLOGIES. Technological and social changes that affect public opinion data gathering require adjustments in research methodologies to maintain and increase our understanding of the way people feel about the important issues that affect their lives.  

Continue to update equipment as needed and expand IPOR staff and facilities through non-university funding. Further develop capabilities in cognitive, GIS, and other survey methodologies  

**Assessment Criteria (Measurable Outcome):**  
Measure equipment installation and funding of staff positions, and applications of new methodologies.  

**Accomplishment:**  
New equipment purchases could not be processed until the move to the new facility was completed. IPOR staff development an important new use of GIS sample design for the REACH 2010 project.  

**Use of Results for Program Improvement**  
New GIS capabilities improve the quality of IPOR’s research project.  

**D. 2001-2002 Annual Goals**  

**2001-2002 Goal 1:** (Addresses University Goal GV Ranking / Research I)  
Work with FIU Researchers and Centers/Departments to Increase University Contract and Grant Funding:  
IPOR provides essential survey and data services support to many individuals and departments conducting research at FIU. The long-range goal is to expand those linkages and thus leverage an increase in the number of survey-based research grants and contracts coming to FIU.  

**Measurable Outcome:**  
The kind of projects IPOR has been doing to reach these objectives is very demanding of staff with advanced computer and statistical skills. IPOR has to be careful not to overextend the ability of its senior staff to cover these projects. The 2001-2002 objective will thus be set at the same level as achieved this year, Enable FIU to bring in $1,600,000 in contracts/grants having IPOR survey component.  

**2001-2002 Goal 2:** (Addresses University Goal GII Research & Creative Activities)  
CONTINUE AND EXPAND THE FIU/FLORIDA POLL PROJECT: Since 1988, IPOR has conducted Florida’s most comprehensive statewide poll. Efforts to make this data useful to decision
makers, educators, and the general public have been ongoing. With new efforts in this area, we expect to see the use of this data expand considerably in the years to come.

**Measurable Outcome:**
Further improve web site data and coverage to include mapping and database availability.

**2001-2002 Goal 3:** *(Addresses University Goal GIV Strategic Themes, and GV Ranking / Research I)*
BECOME FULLY SELF-SUSTAINING: Through survey research and data services operations, IPOR will become fully self-sustaining. IPOR is already providing for all of its equipment needs and will be able to provide for staffing costs on an increasing basis. This funding will come primarily from contracts and grants for survey and data services.

**Measurable Outcome:**
Meet with the Dean of SJMC, FIU’s VP for Research and IPOR’s advisory council to discuss ways to make sure the balance of IPOR’s projects (direct to IPOR vs. to other FIU units that then subcontract IPOR) give the best leverage to get C&G research dollars to FIU.

**2001-2002 Goal 4:** *(Addresses Goal G.IV Strategic Themes, and G.V Ranking / Research I, and T.V. Information)*
EXPAND LINKAGES TO MEDIA: These linkages, in addition to helping to inform the public about public opinion, enhance IPOR’s and FIU’s visibility and research reputation in Florida and in the nation.

**Measurable Outcome:**
Continue discussions with media and SJMC faculty on best ways to communicate and collaborate with media. Further improve web site data and coverage to include mapping and database availability.

**2001-2002 Goal 5:** *(Addresses University Goal G.III. Applied Problem Solving)*
DEVELOP LOCAL AREA RESEARCH STUDIES. South Florida is a unique setting where a large variety of economic, demographic, ethnic, and international forces affect the dynamics of the urban regional system. A fragile ecosystem and frequent hurricanes also shape and constrain the development of the urban area. A large elderly population and large scale immigration put pressures on the health care system. All these are topics that require extensive survey research to study.

**Measurable Outcome**
Continue to expand local area research in areas including regional development, environment, and emergency management. Begin collaboration with Marine Science Center at Biscayne Bay Campus on Biscayne Bay issues. Work with Metro Center to develop FIU/Metro Poll.

**2001-2002 Goal 6:** *(Addresses University Goal G.I. Well Educated Students)*
EXPAND ROLE IN RESEARCH METHODOLOGY EDUCATION through support for SJMC research methodology courses and programs, other FIU department research education efforts, and for individual student thesis and dissertation projects.

**Measurable Outcome:**
Continue discussions with faculty and students from SJMC and other departments on these objectives.

**2001-2002 Goal 7:** *(Addresses University Goal G.III. Applied Problem Solving)*
INCREASE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS ON PUBLIC OPINION METHODOLOGIES. Technological and social changes that affect public opinion data gathering require adjustments in research methodologies to maintain and increase our understanding of the way people feel about the important issues that affect their lives.

**Measurable Outcome:**
Add new GIS capabilities including interactive geo-coding at interviewer workstations.

E. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prior Year

In 2000-2001 IPOR continued to expand its support of C&G-funded research by different units at FIU. Projects in which IPOR played a critical role totaled over $1.7 million in 2000-2001, with $212,215 of that going to IPOR as C&G funds to support its research services for the projects. IPOR's C&G/E&G ratio was in the black—though just slightly, since all its major C&G projects were for other units at FIU and subject to tight budget restraints and bargaining with other units for the scarce grant budget dollars. 2001-2002 will see more grants directly to IPOR so the C&G/E&G ratio should improve significantly.

IPOR’s web site (www.fiu.edu/orgs/ipor/) offered more research products this year (particularly from the FIU/Florida Poll) and has become a major part of FIU’s nationwide research visibility and also a major source for agencies seeking to do research at FIU.

2001-2002

IPOR is moving to a new space in the Hospitality Management Building at the Biscayne Bay Campus. This space will have adequate office space for IPOR's full-time staff and enable an increase in CATI (computer-assisted telephone interview) interviewer stations from the current 16 to 25. This increase in capacity is important because IPOR is being requested to do more projects than it can schedule at its current capacity.

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Over the past two years, IPOR staff and facilities have been increasingly utilized for research methodology instruction and graduate education. Taught by IPOR's director and other faculty, several courses at the graduate level have relied heavily on IPOR expertise and facilities. In AY 1999-2000 IPOR supported two graduate assistantships, and one in AY 2000-2001. It also provided support for a number of other undergraduate and graduate students working as interviewers over the summer. IPOR's director was the committee chair of two graduate students who received their Ph.D's in 2000-2001, is the chair of two current Ph.D. dissertation committees, and is a member of many other thesis and dissertation committees. These activities provide a way to channel IPOR's research expertise into FIU Ph.D. graduation rates.