Researcher Credentialing for Restricted Data Access at ICPSR
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Project description

Funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, this project aims to develop a broadly accepted system of researcher credentialing that will increase the willingness of potential data providers to share data and the ability of researchers to undertake creative analyses of multiple confidential datasets with the least possible risk to privacy and confidentiality. The project has two main objectives: to survey and analyze current repository procedures to determine conditions of access of data users to restricted data, and to develop and test software and an interface to verify and match researcher credentials to the requirements of the restricted dataset. ICPSR is seeking to establish a set of generally accepted credentials (“ICPSR Seals of Approval”) that would facilitate researcher access to (multiple) restricted data sets and simplify the process for data custodians considering making the data available to the research community.

Student role

We are looking for a master’s student who is interested in digital curation and digital repositories to work as a research assistant on this project. The student will be fully integrated into the research team, attend weekly research meetings, and work with repository staff and our PhD student to meet our stated goals.

The student will:
- Receive training in the NVivo qualitative data analysis software and assist in the coding and analysis of documentation and interview transcripts collected
- Be exposed to the changing technical and legal requirements involved in working with restricted data
- Contribute to the development of best practices for repositories
- Be located in the largest and oldest social science data repository and become familiar with repository operations
- Take advantage of multiple educational and social opportunities at ICPSR during its Summer Program, such as the Blalock Lecture Series
- Be exposed to doctoral-level research expectations and experiences

Contribution to Student Academic and Professional Development:
The student will gain experience in qualitative data processing and analysis, and exposure to research project management.
Mentoring

I will meet with the student on a weekly basis outside of the research team meetings, and my doctoral student and I will monitor the student throughout the research and analysis process. We will provide constructive feedback and instruction to the student on all research products.