

**Working Group on Digital Audio Recording, Real-time Court Reporting and
Court Interpreting
Summary of Discussion**

1. In discussing these three distinct topics, several overarching themes emerged concerning digital technology in general. The most important of these is the recognition that information technology can make decision-making more, as opposed to less, difficult for its human users because of the increased availability of information. Therefore, it is crucial to gather more information about the demands courtroom technology places on human decision-making. Systems should be designed to enhance and facilitate decision-making, as opposed to interfering with it.
2. The primary research question, then, should be how technology can be used and developed to facilitate human judgment and decision-making.
3. Several established areas of social and behavioral science can serve as the foundation for research into these aspects of courtroom technology. Those areas include, but are not limited to, the following: judgment and decision-making, social identity theory, social perception (i.e., court reporters and interpreters are individuals with biases that must be taken into consideration), linguistics, and group dynamics.
4. An empirical examination of real-time court reporting could help determine whether real-time improves the quality and efficiency of the judicial process; whether it increases the accessibility of the official record to parties, the press, and the public; and the effects of any increased accessibility.
5. Studies of court interpreting can be divided into two distinct areas: the accuracy of the interpretation and the consideration and attention given to the interpretation. Accuracy is largely a matter of engineering—it can clearly be improved by using better trained and multiple interpreters. The second issue is more a matter of human judgment and perception. Social perceivers apply their attitudes to the social/cultural dimensions attached to language translation.
6. A comprehensive guide to digital audio recording would help specify the potential applications of the technology.
7. Finally, for any research on courtroom technology, collaboration between technology developers, social and behavioral scientists, and legal scholars is essential.