

Minutes of WSSA Executive Council Meeting  
Wednesday, April 12, 2017  
8:00am - 4:30pm

Present: Heather Albanesi, Immediate Past-President; Michèle Companion, President; Barbara Bonnekessen, President-Elect; Christopher Brown, Vice-President/Secretary; (2016-2017), Anthony Amato (2014-2017), Christina Medina (2014-2017), Jesus Ruiz Flores (2014-2017), Debra Andrist (2015-2018), Mary Jo Tippeconic Fox (2015-2018), Stephen Mumme (2015-2018); Moises Diaz (2016-2019), Mark Melichar (2016-2019), William Schaniel (2016-2019, and Student Grants & Awards Coordinator), Larry Gould, Executive Director; Kate Herke, Communications Director; Stephanie Witt, Editor, *The Social Science Journal*, Karen Jarret-Snider (2017-2020)

### General discussion

- Meeting started on time at 8:00am, 4.12.17. Folks went around and introduced themselves. Michèle asked for a motion to approve the April 2016 and September 2016 minutes, Steve Mumme moved, Bill Schaniel seconded, no discussion, no changes, unanimous approval.
- Kate passed out a “suggestions piece,” with the intent to generate ideas for creating a greater inter-disciplinary nature of the conference. People are asked to fill out the suggestions piece and give to Kate.
- Financials - Larry ran the financials on the group, including recent changes. As of 1 Jan 2017, we have \$396,238 in assets, but we have spent ~\$80k on doing the conference. Larry reviewed various investment decisions, noting we are limited as to what we can do to play the market, and we are invested in a range of Fortune 500 companies. Return is ~.5%, which is not much, but we are within the law as to how we are handling our \$. Many of our grants and awards are supported by Elsevier payments (\$70k/year in royalties, plus expenses for editor of SSJ).
- Future projects - Major project is to enhance marketing, and Kate will share details later. Registration will see some changes. Some members question late registration and onsite penalty, but we need this to get people to register early to aid in planning catering and room pickup. Onsite work means more students/more expenses, and we need to cover the onsite work.
- Changing dates for pre-registration. - an earlier pre-registration ending date will generate more \$, but also increases labor, as this drives printing name badges on site at a greater expense. Complicating factors on the member end are inability to pay online from abroad, students needing to nail down funding, and personal issues. Increasing pre-registration is a very positive thing, but at what cost?

- Hotel costs – these are on an upward trend across the industry, and this is linked to increasing difficulty in getting hotels to book us, due to # of breakout and guest rooms. Total bill at GSR was \$66k/\$40k catering, and we are at \$80k/\$53k catering in SF. AV at GSR was \$17k; at Hyatt SF, it will be \$29k (rental, labor, and service fees). This is just the cost of doing business, and we do defer HUGE costs (10s of \$1000s) by using our own projectors. Cost of catering is going up WAY, at a much higher rate than room rates. Overall, the Elsevier royalties allow us to keep the conference costs down, and the whole processes shakes out at a pretty reasonable rate.
- Elsevier contract – current contract ends in 3 years, and our past experience informs the next round. Sage was completely uncompetitive last round, Rutledge feels that we used them to boost the deal with Elsevier, and all contracts allow the incumbent to make the last pitch. Larry has invited Elsevier to make a pitch in the fall, and he is asking if we just want to take their offer if it is reasonable and be done with it. This would prevent us from shopping for a better deal, but it is much simpler. No decision was made.
- Registration desk support – it costs us ~\$6k to pay the students, and it would be ~\$3k if we hired out. We discussed these 2 options in detail, and the comments made were supportive of keeping the student team in place, for numerous reasons. Michèle notes that this is a positive angle on working the regional universities, but we have not been very successful in pulling in local students. After our discussion, Chris Brown moved to keep the student team in place, Tony seconded, and this motion passed unanimously.
- Future meeting sites – we are booked out to 2023, and we will need to think about the 2024 site in the next 6 months. Larry summarized his work on places that work for us and don't work for us, and we will need to make this happen in the fall. Ft. Worth came up positively, as did Kansas City and Albuquerque.
- Web document review – Larry notes that we need to review all the documents currently on the Admin page of the website. Kate has started, and perhaps Tony can help with this.
- ADA compliance – despite our efforts, our attorney is NOT happy with our procedures. A major issue is affiliates doing field trips and other events that will require expensive accommodations. ABS and AFIT events this year are an example of this. Larry notes that we MUST put a disclaimer in ALL of our materials that these events are not WSSA sponsored or similar language. Yes, this can be seen as being unsupportive of ADA and accommodating people with disabilities, but legal issues argue that we have to do this. As part of our communications with these affiliates, we also need to advise them of their responsibility on ADA and ask them to pick venues that are ADA compliant. Chris made a motion that we task Larry to work up the language that will satisfy our legal people and forward for our approval via email. Steve Mumme seconded this, and we voted unanimously to approve this.

**Commented [Office1]:** I don't know what this item is about. Can someone help?

- Break out rooms – thanks to last 4 conference chairs, we have reduced sessions with 1-2 papers considerably, and this has allowed us to reduce break out rooms from 25 to 21. Barbara thinks this is most likely as low as we can go, and this is fine. Related to this is what people are asking us to provide. We cannot provide computers, and we also need to advise people that they need to bring their own cables or PPT files on thumb drive. This must be included in the conference preparation notes online and in the SC handbook.
- Ringing the bells – students will go around and ring bells 8 minutes prior to each session starting, every minute until show time.
- Student workers – Kate passed out a detailed list of rules, regs, and guidelines, and this reflects the many moving parts of the student process. This also includes “how to apply,” and we need to abide by these guidelines. All EC members and officers to send Kate 1 name for a student worker by 1 November.
- Letterhead and notices of participation – Kate worked up LH that we can use to meet these requests, and it is Chris’ responsibility to issue these to people that request them. Larry handles the visa letters, but Chris handles the participation letters.
- Marketing efforts – Kate passed around a flier she worked up advertising the conference, and she asks that we pass out at least 5 of these to peers at our campuses. She also worked up plaques for the award winners and also this incredibly cool globe for the emerging scholar. Kate asks that we think of list serves that we know and love and work with Kate to develop language and send out a blast to advertise the 2018 Conference.
- SC packages – SCs package went out with the SC scoop, and this includes asking people to provide or update their section descriptions, dealing with FB likes.
- Student awards and travel grants – We pitch this on our campus visits with Deans and DHs, but we are getting a VERY limited # of applications. Larry notes how busy Deans are; we REALLY need to follow up with these people. This is CHRIS’ task to handle as part of the campus team prep and follow up.
- We also discussed the possibility of CHRIS/KATE sending the program out to the members directly, not relying on the SCs to do this. Barbara used DropBox (DB) for this, and this also allowed all SCs to see all other sections and look for cross listing options. Chri3 will need to work this out with Barbara and Michèle.
- The actual submission process was pretty straightforward and worked well; some people had a problem with the “I am not a robot,” but they got around this. **HATS OFF TO BARBARA FOR MAKING THIS WORK SO WELL!!!**
- The APP runs for Android and I-Phones, and the program that is online is up to date, as of Friday of last week, 4.7.17. The book and APP work with different files – book works off

**Commented [Office2]:** Do these have to be PDF or PPT files if they are NOT relying on a computer?

Word file, APP works off Excel file. The APP receives a stream on changes. Barbara asks that we review other tools to see if they meet our needs better, and she will work with Michèle and CHRIS over the summer to do this and make a call prior to the fall meeting.

- Giveback and Spotlight Orgs – Michèle provided the backstory of the SF Marin Foodbank that is our Giveback Org this year. The site visit was REALLY helpful. M. also noted that the Food Bank will set up noon on Thursday and be up until the lunch on Friday, and we can also accept the \$ after the breakfast until the lunch. Chris also provided a summary of the Healthy SE Coalition that is our Spotlight Org, and we invited people to both share the news with their friends and interact with the HSEC people.
- Publishing proceedings – we have discussed this over several years, and Deb was recently approached by a publisher who asked if the WSSA would like to publish proceedings. This would be a juried, peer-reviewed exercise. As we discussed this, several issues are in play
  - What about the quality of papers?
  - What about the cost of the project?
  - Who is willing to take on the effort? Would this be a term appointment?
  - Are we shooting ourselves in the foot, creating competition to the SSJ?
- Tony shared a flier with us on a book project he is editing, and 5 of the papers involved are former WSSA papers/presentations. This is another model that we can explore for getting work out. After some discussion, Chris did speak up, noted the challenges that are outlined above, and spoke against the proposal. This was the shared view of the group, and we noted that special issues of the SSJ and edited volumes at the SC level similar to what Jesus and Tony did are better paths to pursue. Michele posed the question to the group, “do we support pursuing this?” No support was expressed, and we let this go.
- Shifting conference activities to Saturday – Kate noted that people tend to be leaving the conference on Saturday and not taking in Saturday papers. She also noted that the reception has been “more business and less play,” and she seeks to change this up with a raffle of state of the art Galaxy 8 tablet this year.

**Commented [Office3]:** POST MEETING NOTE – Despite Chris’ major efforts, we had very limited participation by these folks. Chris asks Michèle, Heather and Barbara to think about “tips and tricks” and share these with Tony and Chris .

### Decisions

- Michèle asked for a motion to approve the April 2016 and September 2016 minutes, Steve Mumme moved, Bill Schaniel seconded, no discussion, no changes, unanimous approval.
- Registration desk support –Chris Brown moved to keep the student team in place and task Kate to sort out details, Tony seconded, and this motion passed unanimously.
- ADA compliance – Details are provided above. Chris made a motion that we task Larry to work up the language that will satisfy our legal people and forward for our approval via email. Steve Mumme seconded this, and we voted unanimously to approve this.

- Kate shared some suggestions on improved email communication, and we decided that Kate will use specific email headers like “FYI, NO ACTION NEEDED” and “ACTION ITEM – PLEASE REPLY.” Barbara moved to provide a student worker to aid Kate during the academic year, Debra seconded. Michèle amended motion to approve a student worker to aid Kate, based on Larry and Kate providing details on hours needed and task involved, and motion was approved.
- We had a visit from the Association for Radical Political Economics, and they would like to develop a WSSA section. Tony moved to accept their offer, Steve seconded, and we voted. The vote was 13 in favor, 1 abstention.

## Reports

- Barbara provided a conference preparation report, with specific #s:
  - 1376 submissions
  - 748 papers accepted
  - 47 panels
  - 18 roundtables

90% of the SCs are doing really well and replying as needed. Similar #s and people did well on providing the documentation needed in the correct form, some sending in copy ready files. Barbara also posted all section detail to a DB site, SCs sent these out to paper submitters, and this generated lots of input. ABS was in constant contact with their people and responded well. SCs also provided ideas on cross listing. 10% of the SCs did not do their job – failed to reject or accept the paper submissions, did not share their program with the people in section, didn’t respond to Barbara’s queries. These people need to be replaced, and Barbara will handle these at the Friday meetings. I will ask them to give me the specifics this week so I am aware of the problem people in play.

### Board meeting Part 2 - 4.15.17

Present: Heather Albanesi, Immediate Past-President; Michèle Companion, President; Barbara Bonnekessen, President-Elect; Christopher Brown, Vice-President/Secretary; (2016-2017), Anthony Amato (2014-2017), Christina Medina (2014-2017), Jesus Ruiz Flores (2014-2017), Debra Andrist (2015-2018), Mary Jo Tippeconic Fox (2015-2018), Stephen Mumme (2015-2018); Moises Diaz (2016-2019), Mark Melichar (2016-2019), William Schaniel (2016-2019), Larry Gould, Executive Director; Kate Herke, Communications Director; Chelsea Schelly, Book Review Editor, *The Social Science Journal*

- President’s Closing Reception and Awards Ceremony – recurring problem with people not listening to speakers. Fix is to do the awards at the end of the business meeting, then move into the reception.
- Fall meeting - 28 September 2017 is arrival date, we are scheduled to spend 2 days, and we will be leaving early to reduce cost of the guest rooms. Advance team will come in on Wednesday

**Commented [Office4]:** Has anyone formally approached ABS about this? I like the fix, we just need to make sure we engage them on this and get them to agree.

to work the regional universities. Advance team is normally (normally Immediate Past-President, President, & President-Elect, but Michele will not be available, so the Vice-President/Secretary may take her place.

Commented [Office5]: Who is the advance team?

- 2 visitors from the Association for Radical Political Economics, Scott Carter and Geoffrey Schnieder, joined us, proposing to develop a WSSA section. They have 450 dues paying members, they are well aligned to AFIT, and they are very active. They are very keen to expand their reach and join our team as a section, and they are long-term supporters of the WSSA. Larry then explained our structure, noting the stand-alone groups that have a structure and elected leadership. Larry asks what they want to do, stand-alone group and less formal arrangements. They would bring active participation to the group, with a strong activist union-oriented interest. Barbara noted that we need to be clear on the need for them to pay WSSA membership/conference fees, and they were clear on this. Scott Carter would be the section coordinator, and they are already working on panels and sessions for the 2018 meeting. Bill pitched the work we are doing to help younger members get engaged in the WSSA and academia. Scott noted they are interested in getting their members published, and Michele noted that we could look to special issues as a means to move forward on pubs. Their overtures were very well received by the Board. Larry notes that the open bar has been very positive, and Scott notes they can spend \$ to help make this happen. They DON'T know how many of their people would attend each year, and Barbara gave the basics on session sizes, mechanics and the timeline. They talked about 7 sessions with 4 papers each, so we are looking at 30 more papers and 30 more people in the hotel. Larry notes that they are already coming to the conferences, attending the meeting and participating, and that they are just looking for an identity. After Scott and Geoffrey left, the Board discussed this proposal. The response from the Board was very positive on many facets to the offer, and we then spoke about how to make this happen. Tony moved, Steve seconded, and we voted. The vote was 13 in favor, 1 abstention. We also discussed mechanics of a reception, and we didn't support having another separate reception, as this runs the risk of spending much money and not having many people attend.
- 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary ideas – Council members were asked to think about what we might do to celebrate.
- ABS breakfast was a problem – it was noted in the program as a breakfast event, but it was a “meet and dash event” that left people unhappy.
- Barbara's conference report – no shows were not a major problem, but B. does not have numbers for this year. We did have a double booking with AIS and ABS, but we were able to work out a fix. APP was pretty successful, with some problems on scrolling issue, and Barbara is sweeping up comments to share with the developers and also have discussions about possibly moving to a different developer. The APP only runs on an I-phone, Android, or tablet, and we just need to tell people this up front and repeatedly.
- Kate's conference report – no major problems surfaced, lots of small fires popped up, and Kate noted that we need to have a tech savvy student working on every shift to help with issues that arise. Current numbers are not available, but the numbers as of Friday were 650 pre-reg people plus 125 onsite (last year it was 450 pre-reg). We did have capacity issues with the WSSA/Admin login, but Kate and students were able to solve this. The onsite reg process is working, but cancels are a problem.

Commented [Office6]: Does anyone remember the name of the second person?

- Reg Online is the WSSA portal tool, it gathers all sorts of data, and it's part of our process. This does require entering all the data on hand in person,
- Square = point of sale tool that turns a mobile phone into a PoS portal, and the \$ go right into the bank. The problem is that this does NOT gather all the related data, and we need to gather this with Google Forms.
- Kate does have a master list of all people that have attended the last 3 years, and she uses this for email blasts, We DO need to get a similar mindset in place for SCs, and this should be part of the revised handbook.
- We are asking session coordinators to do the counts in the rooms, and this will advise how we are doing for no shows.
- Reception and room hopping - we are seeing people crashing the receptions and also crashing our room rate blocks. We will post signs in SA that people must wear name badges at conference event.
- Lack of WiFi access in the meeting rooms was an issue, but making this happen would be VERY expensive, ~\$4k per day. We need to really unwrap this issue:
  - Online access to support ArcMAP Story maps and similar issues - a hotspot or "for fee wireless" access should solve the problem.
  - People wanting access to the Cloud to access their presentation - this is especially important for students and younger scholars, and this is a legitimate need we need to address. Can we count on "Cloud customers" having Wi-Fi hotspots they can use?
  - Larry is working up an email on tech issues, and we can then chime in on issues in play.
  - Once the language is created, that information will be posted on the website and added to the pre-registration information.
- Financials with Larry - see the file that Larry sent for the numbers. Overall, we are in good shape, and we spend 85% of our funds on the conference. Michèle noted that the new scholar awards were REALLY appreciated and worth the money.
- Newsletter issues with Kate - EMAIL notices on the call for the newsletter is working fine, but the timeline needs to be adjusted. The old schedule was built to help with registration numbers, but the timeline on the conference has changed. Kate asked for input on Council's view of appropriate timing - results below
  - We need a summer newsletter to deal with post conference issues.
  - We need a newsletter to announce results of the elections.
  - This leaves fall and spring newsletters to be firmed up, as well as how many we have.
  - For the fall, we like late August for several reasons (early conference call, we are back to work, etc.)
  - Our spring is more for conference clean up.
  - Election results should be out in Jan/Feb, nominations should be made at the fall EC meeting, the ballots should happen in November or so.
  - Suggested timelines;
    - Autumn issue - Late August, 3<sup>rd</sup> week - autumn issue with content, including mention of visa details. Steve will write this item, noting what they need to do by when.

- Summer issue - Third week in May = Summer issue is the housekeeping issue, mostly WSSA business.
- Third week in January for content, election results, and remember to register for the conference, which is a week earlier in 2018 than in 2017. \*
- Topics for newsletter
  - Pictures are good, things appealing to a broad audience NOT in your field, things we feel strongly about, messages we REALLY want to get out (myth=busting), passion and humor sell well, looking at older newsletters.
  - President's soapbox = 2 stories, 1 for fall and 1 for spring.
  - History of the Riverwalk = good topic, and Larry volunteered to write this.
  - Tony will do a cartoon
  - Chelsea will plug the book review in a piece.
  - Christine - the value of mentoring students and the growth of scholars through the WSSA.
- Timeliness - We MUST make the timelines Kate gives us, as she puts her regular job on hold to do the newsletter. 1 day late is not a problem, but anything more of this is a real problem.
- Travel awards
  - Students travel grants - students more than 250 miles away can apply, grant defers their expenses, we fund up to \$500, on a reimbursement basis.
  - Local student waiver - students from the area (less than 250 miles) will have their conference fee waived, and this is handled on an election basis by the deans we visit. This year, we didn't get any from SF Bay area, and we hope for better responses next year in SA.
- Social Media issues - Kate offered to do FB bumps, she has reached out to a few SCs, and she is making some progress.
- Book editor - Chelsea Shelley asks for some help on book reviews and also ideas for books (she won't do textbooks), she has 20 books out for reviews, she has 20 reviews in hand for publication, and she is seeing ~9 months for the timeline of a book review. Steve asks about review essays on a special topic and multiple books, and Chelsea says yes. Bill asks after conference sessions, and Chelsea is willing to do review on these books. Length = 2-3 pages double spaced, and Chelsea has a format letter that goes out.
- Foreign travel issues - Jesus spoke with international visitors, no major issues arose in their travel to the conference, but funding issues are always in play. Michèle is keen that our international colleagues feel supported by the WSSA, and we think they do. Chris asked if Barbara or Michèle can write a newsletter article that makes this case that we want to make and also advise SA is supportive of migrants and Latinos.
- Letters of acceptance - this has to acknowledge acceptance of the paper and payment of the fees. Larry will work on these letters, once he gets the word from me on the paper being in the DB. All requests will go to Larry, he will forward to Chris, and Chris confirm the paper has been submitted.

### Action Items



- Chris will need to work with Barbara and Michèle on insuring that we are compliant with ADA, and this will involve the disclaimer and communications with affiliates. Larry will provide the language the lawyer approves.
- Chris needs to update the SC handbook to advise SCs to advise their people about things they need to bring for AV. Thumb drives are the easiest to accommodate, and people are going to have to bring their own cables. Larry, Kate and Barbara will work up the language for both the Website and handbook and share with me.
- All EC members and officers to send Kate 1 name for student workers by 1 November.
- Campus visit team in SA will need to bring along the student worker document to the campus visits. This will also be posted to the Website.
- Chris to engage with Barbara and Michèle on the planning and follow up of the campus visits. This involves working up the list of people to visit, making appointments, and then following up with email and phone calls.
- Chris to get copy of the SC handbook NOW and review prior to the SC meeting.
- Chris to make the 3 WSSA meetings on Friday afternoon, take notes, and be prepared.

Meeting adjourned about 11:30am.