

**2012-2013 ASA Council  
First Meeting  
Draft Minutes**

**Tuesday, August 21, 2012**  
Colorado Convention Center, Room 103  
Denver, CO

**Officers Present:** Catherine White Berheide (Secretary), Jennifer Glass (Vice President), Annette Lareau (President-Elect), Brian Powell (Vice President-Elect), Cecilia Ridgeway (President), Mary Romero (Secretary-Elect), Edward Telles (Past Vice President), Erik Olin Wright (Past President)

**Members-at-Large Present:** Stephanie Bohon, David Brunnsma, Kelly Joyce, Amanda Lewis, Cecilia Menjivar, Joya Misra, Dina Okamoto, Monica Prasad, Jane Sell, Mario Luis Small, Laurel Smith-Doerr, Robin Wagner-Pacifici

**Staff Present:** Janet L. Astner, Sally T. Hillsman, Kareem D. Jenkins, Michael Murphy, Jean Shin, Brad Smith, Roberta Spalter-Roth, Margaret Weigers Vitullo

## **1. Introductions and Orienting Documents**

President Cecilia Ridgeway convened the first meeting of the 2012-2013 ASA Council at 8:36am on Tuesday, August 21, 2012. After congratulations were extended to now Past President Erik Olin Wright, there was a round of Council member introductions. Ridgeway then reminded members that they are the elected body of the organization that makes decisions and expressed hopes for disciplined commentary on routine items so that there would be time and energy to discuss things especially important to the membership. Two pressing items on the meeting agenda were noted: the potential preparation of an amicus brief to the US Supreme Court regarding the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), and disposition of old editorial office files at Penn State.

### *A. Approval of the Agenda*

A request was made to move the DOMA discussion forward in the agenda so that discussion could occur right after lunch.

MOTION: To approve the agenda as revised. Carried (no opposed).
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### *B. Conflict of Interest Statement*

New Council members were reminded to turn in their signed statements before departing.

## **2. Report of the Secretary**

### *A. Summary Review of the 2012 Budget*

Secretary Catherine White Berheide indicated that it was possible there would be a budget deficit at year's end, even though meeting attendance was reasonably strong.

### *B. Membership Report*

Membership dropped a little in 2012, and marketing efforts in August-September will be hampered somewhat due to the changes in the dues structure for 2013. On the positive side, the Retired and Unemployed categories that were implemented have been favorably received. Council members were encouraged to look carefully at the dues structure and dues amounts provided in the membership memo so that they would be prepared to answer questions from their colleagues when renewal time arrives.

Council member Laurel Smith-Doerr, liaison to the Committee on Sections (COS), indicated that COS had raised a question regarding the International Associate (IA) membership category. Executive Officer Sally Hillsman clarified that the IA category is heavily subsidized and available to individuals in soft currency countries only. IA members receive online journal access only; nothing is mailed.

### *C. Journal Subscription Report*

Berheide reported that the trend of members subscribing to fewer journals is continuing. Institutional subscriptions are healthy because the SAGE bundling gets journals into more places.

### *D. Subscription Rates for 2013*

ASA's publishing partners (SAGE and Wiley-Blackwell) require approval of annual subscription rates prior to the mid-year meeting of the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB) in order to include ASA journals in their marketing materials to libraries for early renewal. Berheide approved the 2013 rates early this summer on behalf of EOB and Council (a process confirmed as appropriate by EOB and Council last year).

At its meeting in July, EOB supported plans and goals for pricing adjustments that aim to bring more parity across quarterly publications and affirm the *American Sociological Review* (ASR) as the flagship journal of the Association. Because Blackwell's institutional prices were higher for *Sociological Methodology* (SM) and *Sociological Theory* (ST) than the rates ASR, ASA approved smaller increases for these journals in 2013 and higher increases for ASA's other journals. This will shortly bring all the journals into appropriate pricing relationship and all the quarterlies to the ST price level.

In response to a question about pricing for journals sponsored by ASA Sections, it was noted that different publishers handle those journals and different sets of arrangements and pricing structures are involved. Another query posed the question of whether it might become possible to reduce submission fees paid by authors in the future.

There was some discussion regarding why efforts are being made to keep journal pricing in the modest range instead of going with what the market will bear. ASA has historically viewed publishing journals as a collaborative enterprise with universities, and gouging libraries runs counter to that principle. This approach has now provided room for the current adjustment strategy to be used without too much impact on library budgets. Discussion concluded with consensus to support the strategy for institutional subscription pricing as presented by the ASA Secretary.

### 3. Committee, Advisory Panel, and Task Force Appointments

#### A. Nominations from the President, Secretary, Executive Officer

The President's list of liaison assignments for Council members was circulated. The Secretary then presented a list of nominees to fill the upcoming vacancy for the at-large seat on the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB).

MOTION: To approve the list of nominees for EOB. Carried unanimously.

The Executive Officer presented nominations for advisory committees that support three ASA programs: Honors Program, Minority Fellowship Program, and Spivack Program in Applied Social Research and Social Policy.

MOTION: To approve the lists of nominees as proposed for the Honors Program Advisory Panel, the Minority Fellowship Program Advisory Panel, and the Spivack Program Advisory Panel. Carried unanimously.

#### B. Nominations from the Committee on Committees (COC)

Governance and Information Systems Director Michael Murphy presented the COC report. The ASA Bylaws charge COC to prepare rank-ordered lists of nominees for Council to approve appointments to committees. COC meets for a full day during the Annual Meeting to accomplish this. Work is also done in advance to recruit and vet nominees and determine their eligibility.

Since Council's comments last year indicated that too much information was provided about nominees in the report, the lists presented for review this year were more concise. This brought out some concerns about diversity of scholarship represented on some lists, and it was noted that information about the current composition of each committee was necessary to provide the context for how COC structured the nominee lists and rankings.

It was noted that it has often been difficult to fill the vacancies on the Committee on the Status of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Persons in Sociology. A longer list of nominees for that status committee was requested in the future.

Another concern was that the lists included names of sitting Council members, and it is against ASA policy for members to serve on committees for which Council has appointive authority. There was immediate consensus that the names of all sitting members of Council be removed from the COC lists.

MOTION: To approve the COC report of nominees for appointments to committees, with the proviso that spelling errors are corrected and names of sitting Council Members are deleted. Carried unanimously.

#### C. ASA Representatives to Other Organizations

No new appointments were needed for 2013. However, the Executive Officer welcomed suggestions from Council members of potential nominees for future reference.

#### 4. Annual Meetings

##### *A. President's Update on the 2013 Program*

The theme for the 2013 Annual Meeting is "Interrogating Inequality: Micro and Macro." Ridgeway commented that sessions will look at how inequality, in all its multi-dimensional complexity, is produced in contemporary societies. In particular, thematic sessions will focus on linking micro and macro processes and perspectives on inequality. The 2013 Program Committee has been working hard and their portion of the program planning is about 95 percent complete.

Three plenary sessions are planned. The opening plenary will be on inequality and contemporary social protest, with participants Barbara Ehrenreich, Theda Skocpol, and Doug McAdam. The topic of the second plenary is micro-processes as mechanisms of inequality, with presenters Larry Bobo, Shelley Correll, Annette Lareau, and Jane McLeod. The third plenary focuses on how equality in the US is changing; speakers are David Grusky, Paula England, Tomas Jimenez, and Robert Mare.

Six presidential panels have been organized on structural and cultural dimensions of inequality, immigration and the changing racial terrain, organizational dynamics and inequality, grappling with inequality, cultural meanings of gender and inequality, and lastly, changing beliefs about inequality, opportunity, and mobility.

Ridgeway expressed some hopes about getting a special evening speaker or two; invitations are in progress to Hilary Clinton and Paul Krugman. At least one session slot is being held to permit the possibility of addressing issues surrounding the Presidential election in November.

##### *B. President-Elect's Report on the 2014 Program Committee*

President-Elect Annette Lareau reported that the theme for the 2014 Annual Meeting in San Francisco will be "Hard Times: The Impact of Economic Inequality on Families and Individuals." Nominees for appointment to the 2014 Program Committee were presented for approval. Some difficulties have been encountered with getting a carryover member from the 2013 Program Committee so that slot is currently pending.

MOTION: To approve the list of members proposed for the 2014 Program Committee. Carried.
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##### *C. Registration and Other Fees for 2013*

Noting the registration fees had been held steady for two years, Meeting Services Director Kareem Jenkins presented recommendations from EOB to increase fees by \$5-10 for 2013. The rationale for raising fees cited higher costs in New York City and the continuing increase in technology support during the meeting. Information was provided comparing ASA fees with those of similar organizations that belong to COSSA, the Consortium of Social Science Associations, showing that ASA's member registration fee ranked second lowest among the eight organizations.

There was some question about raising fees when going to a high cost destination, but it was also clear that it would be necessary to cover labor costs and technology support in major cities like New York City and San Francisco. For future consideration, a request was made to have information about membership dues for other social science organizations shown alongside their registration rates.

MOTION: Council approves an increase in general registration fees for 2013 for full member/non-member categories by \$10, for student and related categories (retired/emeritus, unemployed, secondary school teacher) by \$5, for guests by \$10, and an increase of \$10 each in fees for Courses, Employment Service Candidates (members & non-members), and Employers. Carried unanimously.

Council took a short break at 10:00 – 10:15am.

## 5. Publications

### A. Report of the Publications Committee

Secretary Berheide reported a number of important issues considered by that committee.

The editor of *Teaching Sociology* (TS) requested 40 additional pages for the January 2013 issue. That issue is on writing for sociology, and a large number of high quality manuscripts were received. At a cost of \$90 per page, the budget impact is an increase of \$3,600. The Publications Committee voted in favor of these additional pages, and the Executive Officer indicated the allocation would be built in the 2013 budget if approved by Council.

MOTION: To approve a one-time allocation of 44 additional pages for the special issue of *Teaching Sociology*. Carried unanimously.

The ASA Task Force on Sociology and Global Climate Change, chaired by Riley Dunlap, is nearing completion of its compilation of an edited volume containing multi-authored chapters with important insights from sociology on key aspects of climate change. Oxford University Press has expressed interest in publishing the proposed book, and it is likely that a contract will be offered upon successful completion of peer review of the volume.

The Task Force submitted a request to the Publications Committee to publish the book as an official ASA publication, similar to volume on *Sociology in America* edited by Craig Calhoun published by the University of Chicago Press in conjunction with the Association's centennial. Berheide relayed the Publications Committee's recommendation to approve this request. After some clarification regarding the distinction between ASA sponsoring the publication and approving it as an official ASA publication, Council agreed with the recommendation.

MOTION: To publish the edited volume compiled by the ASA Task Force on Sociology and Global Climate Change as an official ASA publication. Carried (17 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention).

Berheide then reported that the Publications Committee would be posting vision statements from editorial candidates in the fall and inviting comments from members. This is intended to be a three-year experiment, after which there will be an assessment to determine what effect, if any, there was on the candidate pool.

At its February 2012 meeting, Council referred recommendations from Council's *ad hoc* committee on journal review times to the Publications Committee, which then created a subcommittee consisting of two editors, one elected at-large member, and the elected chair of the Committee on Publications, to look at the recommendations. Berheide summarized the outcome of the subsequent review as accepted by the Publications Committee.

The recommendation to create and maintain a website of potential reviewers and their specialties that could be searched with keywords was declined because most if not all journals maintain databases of appropriate reviewers.

The request to ask for editorial lag numbers that exclude manuscripts rejected without external review and 2nd or 3rd-round conditional acceptances in the statistics collected was supported. In addition to the traditional statistics, two other measures of time will be requested from the editors: one for time of submission to final acceptance (excluding R&R), and one that excludes manuscripts rejected without external review and conditional acceptances. The Publications Committee indicated its intention to monitor these measures

The Publications Committee agreed with the recommendation to make ASA's online publication *Publishing Options* available to members for free. It was noted that *Publishing Options* contains links to journal statistics on the homepage of each journal. This will assist authors in finding information on editorial lag times, which was another recommendation from the *ad hoc* committee.

The request to encourage editors to send letters to department chairs summarizing the performance of faculty members as reviewers, and encourage department chairs to take this information into account when considering tenure and promotion, received cautious support. There was concern about sending letters to chairs, as it then becomes possible to interpret the reviewing activity as time spent on the wrong thing from a departmental view. The Publications Committee went the route of offering the option of providing a letter to a department chair IF the reviewer is interested in having that done. This is an approach similar to that used for letters to chairs about service on ASA committees.

The suggestion to present an annual "best reviewer" award at the Annual Meeting, with the recipient determined by editors, was declined after the neither the Publications Committee nor Council could operationalize the idea without significant downsides.

The next recommendation dealt with interviewing editors on what strategies work best for faster manuscript review as the basis for a document summarizing the findings. The Publications Committee strongly supports facilitating communication among editors, and already schedules a meeting of the ASA editors during each Annual Meeting. During the Committee's discussion of this recommendation, it discovered, however, that editors rarely attend this meeting because it is not publicized. The Executive Office was asked to make sure that editors are invited to attend that meeting. If editors of non-ASA journals wish to meet, a separate meeting can be arranged during the Annual Meeting.

The recommendation to compile a document summarizing skilled reviewers' strategies for reviewing articles in a thorough and timely manner was referred back to the *ad hoc* committee. The Publications Committee indicated that the *ad hoc* committee was welcome to interview reviewers nominated by editors as unusually skilled, if it wished to do so.

The final recommendation of the *ad hoc* committee was for ASA to provide an opportunity for a public discussion of the issue of manuscripts rejected by sociology journals without review. The Publications Committee discussed this with ASA editors but did not feel that contacting editors of non-ASA journals was within the scope of the committee's responsibilities.

As chair of the *ad hoc* committee, Council Member at-Large Monica Prasad expressed thanks for the work of the Publications Committee and its subcommittee and the follow-up report to Council by Secretary Berheide.

Berheide went on to cover several more issues that were discussed during the Publications Committee meeting. A Publications subcommittee was created to examine whether the ASA might support members who want to blog, with the understanding that some guidelines about processes would be needed. Another subcommittee will be looking at the possibility of raising editors' honoraria, which has not been increased since 1981. Lastly, issues of open access were discussed with an eye toward outlining a policy regarding how research can be posted online and still be considered eligible for publication.

#### *B. Disposition of Editorial Office Files at Penn State University*

The official ASA historical archive is housed at Pennsylvania State University (PSU). The PSU Special Collection librarian notified ASA that an assortment of materials from journal editorial offices cannot be made publicly available through the archives, so the university no longer wishes to retain them. These materials, consisting of 580 bankers boxes, are primarily submitted but unpublished manuscripts and peer reviews from the period 1991 to 2009 covering some periods for some ASA journals. ASA must either move the boxes to another storage facility or let the university destroy them later this month. Given the imminent deadline, ASA Archivist Michael Murphy was prepared to go to Penn State immediately following the Council meeting to enact whatever Council decided about the materials.

Secretary Berheide indicated that this matter had been discussed by EOB and the Publications Committee, and that the members of the ASA Section on the History of Sociology had contributed comments. While there is a strong desire to keep historical materials from some segments of the membership, the copyright of rejected manuscripts belong to the authors, not to the Association. Some viewpoints hold that there is an unwritten contract with peer reviewers, based on the *ASA Editorial Office Procedures Manual* and the *ASA Code of Ethics*, that these confidential materials should not be made available (except under court order). Berheide reported that, after much difficult and thoughtful discussion, both EOB and the Publications Committee recommend that the materials be destroyed once they are no longer needed for administrative purposes, as shown in the background memorandum provided to Council.

Past President Wright commented that the spokesperson most passionate about not destroying the materials is Alan Sica who is both an ASA editor and a leader in the History of Sociology Section. Council discussion included some disagreement with the legal perspective and confidentiality concerns contained in the background memo provided to Council. There was also discussion of whether the materials could be culled and then digitized

Hillsman clarified that the Executive Office will find a way to accomplish whatever is decided by Council after its thorough discussion of the information in the background memo. The content of

these editorial office materials includes editorial correspondence, manuscripts that were rejected and copies of confidential peer reviews. Some of the review correspondence is (blind) peer reviews that went to authors; some is identified peer reviews that contained information passed on to editors (blind) by the editor. Intellectual property law is clear that the Association does not have rights to use the content of rejected manuscripts. If ASA were to allow access to those for research purposes, even under rigorous confidentiality agreements with the researchers, it would violate the copyright. If rejected manuscripts are retained, ASA must secure access to them unless they are subject to subpoena if a lawsuit is filed. The major concern about the peer reviews is not a matter of law, but of ethics and implied contract. The ASA Code of Ethics and all ASA's publication policies/procedures say that such documents are confidential.

Several Council members expressed reluctance in principle to take any action that is not reversible. Decision-making and review processes are different now than when the journals began, and it is important to think of ways to protect historical materials without violating copyright issues or ethical principles. It was pointed out that the editor, reviewers, and author(s) know everything about what happened with a paper; the process is not a private one-to-one exchange. There was some sentiment for retaining all the documents until a fuller policy is put in place. While this will incur some costs for the Association, it would also prevent making a non-reversible decision. There was also considerable pessimism that any other library would keep this large body of material in a secure archive. Those that are doing this for scholarly associations, at least as a temporary measure, are dealing with one journal, not nine.

Support for retaining the materials focused on their potential intellectual merits to scholars. Among other things, race and gender scholarship was coming to the forefront in the 1980s. However, it is likely that these files are not a complete or systematic record of the editorial offices' work which limits but does not eliminate their value.

Discussion continued regarding the electronic record of ASA editorial office manuscript and peer review tracking during the period of 1991-2009. Most of the editorial offices used an ASA electronic tracking system during this period. While that system (Tracker/JournalBuilder) contains much information about who submitted manuscripts, their titles, names of reviewers, dates and decisions, the database does not contain either manuscripts or actual peer reviews. Since SAGE became ASA's publishing partner, however, all the ASA editorial offices use SAGETrack, an electronic tracking system that contains similar information as well as the manuscripts and peer reviews themselves. During the period 1991 to 2009, the Tracker/JournalBuilder data could be used for more limited types of research because there are no manuscripts or peer reviews.

Concern was expressed that submitting authors were unaware that their manuscripts would be retained and potentially made available for scholarly use at a later time. There was discussion about whether authors of rejected manuscripts during 1991-2009 could be contacted to sign releases so that the material could be used for research. There are practical problems in doing this, but it is not out of the question. Similarly, peer reviewers could be contacted but, again, with significant effort and with no assurance of success.

Berheide supplied some information on cost estimates to retain the materials in question. If the boxes are stored in the climate-controlled facility in DC currently used by ASA, the annual cost would be around \$15,000. It would likely take another \$50,000 to digitize the materials, plus staff time.

Consent issues are very important, and there are real issues about protecting confidentiality and what agreements were entered into or implied with authors. It is also easy to exaggerate how many people will use the data/information. Some of the demographic data most desired by researchers will not be in the editorial files.

From an organizational standpoint, there are two different types of—ethical and legal—and Council has a responsibility to protect the organization. Authors did not submit their manuscripts with the understanding that the material would become part of a permanent archive. The same can be said about reviews. The ASA archivist looked at approximately 10% of the boxes in June, and in addition to rejected manuscripts, there were review materials that reviewers clearly expected to remain confidential.

A question was raised regarding what other associations do with editorial office materials, since intellectual property issues are clearly at stake in this matter. It was pointed out that many journals are not owned by associations, they are owned by publishers. Murphy reported that at a meeting in July sponsored by the ACLS at the Rockefeller Archive Center, the issue of archiving rejected manuscripts and peer reviews was discussed. None of the member associations have been successful in finding an archive willing to accept these types of records. Those associations that retain them don't know what to do with them, are unclear about the risks associated with them, and are not storing them in an environment conducive to long-term preservation. In most cases, they are also the records of only one journal.

There was a suggestion to separate the issue of dealing with the 580 boxes of editorial files at Penn State from the issue of what to do going forward regarding permissions from authors and reviewers. Despite ethical and legal issues and the potential costs involved, Council members continued to express concerns about with destroying journal history.

Wright proposed that the Publications Committee be asked to propose a policy to Council about submitted materials from this point forward (which are all in electronic and not paper format). That policy could then be applied to the 580 boxes at Penn State to integrate those materials as appropriate into the historical archive. The practical implementation of this proposal would involve ASA immediately moving the boxes from Penn State to a secure location and storing them until the required policy decisions are made.

MOTION: To move the 580 boxes from Penn State to a secure storage environment and hold them there for a year while policy decisions are made about how to deal with permissions and archiving for the future. When a policy is in place, materials in the boxes will be handled in accordance with the policy. Carried (12 yes, 6 no, 2 abstentions).

Council then referred the task of policy development to the Committee on Publications. There was clarification that the Council action did not deal with hiring an archivist, culling materials, or moving ahead on digitization. Those matters would be considered after the policy decision is made.

Council took a lunch break at 12:00 – 1:00pm, then took up discussion of item 10C before returning to the agenda schedule.

## 6. Committee on Sections

### A. *Report of the Committee on Sections*

There was no discussion.

## 7. Updates from Status Committees

Ridgeway asked whether there were any questions or issues about any of the updates from the four status committees: Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in Sociology (CSREMS), Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities in Sociology, Committee on the Status of Women in Sociology, and Committee on the Status of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Persons in Sociology.

It was noted the CSREMS report is being used to get dialogue about diversity started in departments. That report has also been shared with regional sociological societies and the National Council of State Sociological Associations.

## 8. New Task Forces

### A. *Task Force on Community College Faculty*

The original proposal for the Task Force approved by Council designated two Co-Chairs and two representatives from four-year institutions. A list of eight volunteers was presented for appointment to the task force.

**MOTION:** Council approves the membership of the Task Force on Community College Faculty in Sociology as proposed. Carried (no opposed).

### B. *Task Force on the Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Sociology*

A list of volunteers and nominees was presented for appointment. It was noted that there are openings for additional suggestions.

**MOTION:** Council approves the nominees as proposed for the ASA Task Force on Post-Doctorate Fellowships in Sociology. Carried (no opposed).

## 9. Report of the Executive Officer

### A. *Amendment to ASA Policy on Exhibits, Advertisements, and Sales*

ASA has a longstanding policy regarding what may be exhibited, advertised, or sold under the auspices of the Association, but that policy does not explicitly say that ASA can use or rent the membership list. New nonprofit regulations for corporations in DC now require that there be a board policy about use of membership lists. Proposed revisions to current policy are noted below in bold.

All items exhibited, advertised, and/or sold under the auspices of the American Sociological Association (e.g., at the Annual Meeting, in Footnotes, or in direct mailings to the ASA membership **through the use or rental of the ASA membership list**) must be of a nature that they can reasonably be considered to be:

1. "tools of the trade" by sociologists acting in their professional capabilities as faculty, students, and/or sociological practitioners;
2. of benefit to individual members (e.g., insurance offered at competitive rates because of group membership); or
3. of benefit to the ASA while insuring that individual members have adequate information regarding costs to subscribers (e.g., credit cards, a portion of whose profits go to the ASA).

The character of the exhibits, advertisements, or sales is subject to the approval of the Executive Officer or her/his designee. The ASA reserves the right to refuse any application for exhibit space, advertising, or sales, and to curtail or cancel any such exhibit, advertisement, or sale which, in the sole judgment of the Executive Officer, does not conform to these guidelines. This policy applies to **the use or rental of the ASA membership list**, unacceptable displays, advertisements, or sales of novelties and souvenirs, as well as the personal conduct of exhibitors or their representatives.

There were no questions about the proposed revisions, and Council proceeded to vote.

**MOTION:** Council approves the amendments to the ASA policy on exhibits, advertisements, and sales under the auspices of the Association that explicitly adds "the use or rental of the ASA membership list" as stated above. Carried (no opposed).

#### *B. ASA Post-Doctoral Fellowship Program and Research*

In 2010 ASA became a partner with six sociology departments to house a new Postdoctoral Fellowship program in sociology for two years. The program was initiated by these departments and funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) through the Sociology Program headed by Patricia E. White. Each department has hosted one Fellow each in 2010-12 and will do so again in 2012-14 for a total of 12 Fellows.

Under the direction of Roberta Spalter-Roth, Director of the ASA Research on the Discipline and Profession, ASA has been conducting an evaluation of the Postdoctoral Fellowship program as part of ASA's longer-range interest on the impact of postdoctoral positions on the career trajectories, scientific productivity, and overall job satisfaction of sociology PhDs. A brief overview of the evaluation of the first cohort of postdoctoral fellows was provided to Council.

#### *C. Public Affairs and Public Information*

Public Affairs and Public Information Director Brad Smith reported that the biggest problem in Washington right now is the budget. Sequestration calls for an 8 percent across-the-board cut on January 1, 2013. Because the House has decided to save the defense budget from these cuts, it is likely that overall funding for sciences (NIH) will be cut by 20 percent if sequestration occurs. The funding bill for NSF cut \$11 million from the political science program, and the follow-up in July is that NIH and HHS cannot fund any research associated with economics. There is reason to be concerned that sociology may be viewed as next in line for funding cuts, so ASA members need to be encouraged to write their representatives in Congress.

*D. Technology Update*  
(no discussion)

*E. External Grants*

Research Director Spalter-Roth reported that the Supplement to the FAD (Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline) Grant for Research was funded by NSF on June 7, 2012, for \$15,098. This summer a proposal was submitted to the NSF REESE program for a new grant on “Social Interventions to Increase Collaboration, Diffusion, and Diversity in STEM Teaching and Learning Technology.”

**10. New Business**

*A. ASA Business Meeting Resolutions*

Two member resolutions were passed at the ASA Business held on Monday morning, August 20, 2012.

*1 – Appreciation of 2012 Meeting Site and Bicycle Program*

The following resolution was presented by ASA member Michael Polgar (Pennsylvania State University) at the ASA Business Meeting, where it was approved by those who attended the meeting.

Whereas we appreciate the efforts of students and faculty at the University of Colorado-

Denver to host our meeting and to host a tour of Denver on Bicycle, and

Whereas travel and tourism by human power is consistent with stated goals of ASA,

Denver, our communities, and our nations, and

Whereas we appreciate the efforts of Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper to create, and

Perry Burnap to run, the B-Cycle program that allows us to cycle through “Wheel Utopias” in the host city:

We express thanks from the ASA to the City of Denver and the UC-Denver organizers, and ask the ASA to explore the promotion of bicycling and human-powered bicycle tours of future ASA host cities, so that “Wheel Utopias” will be realized in ASA’s future.

MOTION: To approve the resolution. Carried (no opposed).

*2 – Statement Expanding the Commitment of the ASA to Human Rights Scholarship and Policy-Level Work at the United Nations.*

The ASA Section on Human Rights asked ASA to affirm the human rights scholarship and policy-level work at the United Nations (UN) that section members are currently undertaking and proposed two specific activities:

- That ASA sponsor and commit to formalizing its relationship with the UN by submitting applications to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the NGO Section of the Department of Public Information (DPI) for consultative status with the ECOSOC and associative status with the DPI.
- That ASA serve as a sponsor of and a participant in a Sociology Day at the UN to support members of the ASA Section on Human Rights and other sections.

Members attending the Business Meeting voted to approve the statement.

Council discussion noted that interest in human rights has been growing within ASA, and if section members are interested in doing this work, the Association should support it. In response to an

inquiry regarding the potential cost of this support, it was pointed out that the proposal estimated that \$5,000 would be needed for planning a Sociology Day, in addition to the staff time involved. Secretary Berheide indicated that it was possible to arrange to cover these costs in the ASA budget.

MOTION: To approve the proposals from the ASA Section on Human Rights to formalize a relationship with the UN and help sponsor a Sociology Day at the UN. Carried (no opposed).

*B. Date for 2013 Winter Council Meeting*

Dates in late January or early February were proposed for the winter Council meeting. After reviewing Council members' availability, the winter meeting was confirmed for January 26-27, 2013.

*C. Potential Amicus Brief to the US Supreme Court re: Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)*

A number of ASA members brought to the attention of ASA's elected leadership that the constitutionality of the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is currently being litigated in the courts and that research by sociologists is being presented in some of the *amicus* brief. The issue before Council was whether ASA should be prepared to file or contribute to an *amicus* brief for the U.S. Supreme Court when DOMA comes before it.

Several ASA sections have also raised this issue, and some members have questioned the quality of some of the research being cited and about the misuse of research data by various sides in the DOMA litigation.

If ASA was to submit an *amicus curiae* brief, it was suggested that it would be best for it focus on a scholarly review of sociological literature in this area, including the methodological challenges. The review can examine the state of the art in this field and what claims can or cannot be made reliably. This approach would be the most productive in terms of helping the court understand what we know from research and what we do not know as well as drawing attention to methodological challenges in many of the studies that are being used by all parties.

Council discussed that because the 90-day turnaround time between cases being scheduled on the Supreme Court docket and deadlines set for submission of *amicus* briefs is very short for drafting a brief. Therefore, ASA should begin work on the literature review immediately, assuming a DOMA case will be on the 2012-2013 Supreme Court docket. Council needed to identify a scholar who will be asked to start work immediately on assembling what sociology has to offer on this issue.

A question was raised about the cost of preparing an *amicus* brief. Expenses of the literature review will depend on where the scholar is located and how much support for a research assistant will cost at that institution. In terms of paying a lawyer to write the formal brief, ASA has not incurred such costs for previous briefs because lawyers were found who worked *pro bono*. ASA may also have to underwrite the cost of printing the brief, which is around \$6,000 - \$7,000.

Council reached consensus about preparing to do the proposed *amicus* brief.

MOTION: Council authorizes preparations to file an *amicus brief* for U.S. Supreme Court consideration in DOMA case. This includes appointment of a scholar to assess the scientific state of sociological literature in this area and

provide appropriate methodological analyses of the literature. Carried unanimously.

Council then proceeded to nominate members considered to be experts in the field of family sociology, including eminent methodologists familiar with outcomes and family structure. There was some discussion of the potential conflict of interest involved with including any scholars who have made recent public statements about some of the more controversial research. It was suggested that the President personally call the candidates to discuss the project and determine their interest, availability, and eligibility.

MOTION: To approve the rank-ordered list of scholars to be invited to do the literature review for the DOMA brief. Carried (no opposed).

Hillsman noted that the decision regarding whether ASA would file its own brief or contribute to a collaborative brief will be determined by two factors—how much pertinent sociological research there is, and who else is preparing a brief.

*D. Membership Views Regarding the Benefits of ASA Membership*

Discussion of this new business was deferred to next Council meeting.

*E. Other New Business*

No other new business was brought to the table.

President Ridgeway adjourned the first meeting of the 2012-2013 ASA Council at 3:52 p.m. on Tuesday, August 21, 2012.