

**2015-2016 ASA Council
First Meeting
Final Minutes**

Wednesday, August 26, 2015

Hilton Chicago, Boulevard C Room, 2nd floor
Chicago, IL

Officers Present: Paula England (Past President), Kathleen Gerson (Vice President-Elect), Michele Lamont (President-Elect), Cecilia Menjivar (Past Vice President), Ruth Milkman (President), Barbara Risman (Vice President), Mary Romero (Secretary), David Takeuchi (Secretary-Elect)

Members-at-Large Present: Daniel Chambliss, Tina Fetner, Cynthia Feliciano, Tanya Golash-Boza, Adia M. Harvey Wingfield, Margaret Hunter, Peter Kivisto, Karyn Lacy, Leslie McCall, Mignon Moore, Wendy Ng, Patricia E. White

Staff Present: Janet L. Astner, Les Briggs, John Curtis, Karen Gray Edwards, Sally T. Hillsman, Justin Lini, Michael Murphy, Jean Shin, Margaret Weigers Vitullo

Guests Present: Hayley Lotspeich and Chris Salituro (High School Sociology Planning Program co-directors)

1. Introductions and Orienting Documents

President Ruth Milkman opened the first meeting of the 2015-16 Council at 8:38am on Wednesday, August 26, 2015, and expressed gratitude to all Council members for their service to the Association.

A. Approval of the Agenda

Several changes in the order of agenda items were proposed, and some new items were added.

MOTION: To approve the agenda as revised. Carried (no opposed).

B. Conflict of Interest (COI) Statement

The new officers and members-at-large were requested to sign the COI statement and give it to Governance Director Michael Murphy.

2. Report of the Secretary

A. Executive Search

Secretary Mary Romero indicated that, as Council was aware, Executive Officer Hillsman had offered her resignation effective May 31, 2016. The Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB) has historically carried out the search and selected the best candidate for Council approval. After a long discussion during its July meeting, EOB decided to hire a search firm to conduct the search for a new Executive Officer. Proposals were solicited from five firms, and in mid-August EOB narrowed the field down to two firms. Interviews will be scheduled with the two firms by early September.

After the firm has been selected, a job announcement will be constructed. The firm will solicit information from Council, EOB, and Executive Office staff. The position will be announced in usual job sites, including the ASA Job Bank, but the firm will also conduct a wide head-hunting exercise for candidates that might not be currently job searching. The anticipated timeframe is based on doing interviews with top candidates in conjunction with the January 2016 EOB meeting, with the goal being to present the final candidate for approval at the March 2016 Council meeting.

Romero informed Council that Hillsman agreed to be flexible on the actual transition date and indicated that EOB was confident that the transition would go smoothly, in part because ASA has top notch professional staff that can be relied on.

The President invited Council members to mention factors that should be considered during the search and selection. One suggestion pointed out the importance of understanding public relations in the new era of social media and suggested that a member of the Task Force on Engaging Sociology might be included in the discussion.

B. Summary Review of the 2015 Budget

(1). FAQ about the ASA budget

The Secretary indicated that the FAQ document was prepared a couple years ago to orient Council members to the ASA budget.

(2). Trends in revenues and expenditures

This set of trend data looked at the ongoing (annual and cumulative) dollar impact that the 2007-2015 membership decline is having on the ASA Operating Budget. Finance Director Les Briggs summarized some background and key points. The Association's membership counts have fluctuated up and down over the past 50 years, ranging between a low of 11,223 in 1984 and a high of 14,934 in 1972. There seems to be a normal ebb and flow that naturally occurs over time.

The current membership decline starts from a 2007 level of 14,757 and generally drops steadily in the seven year period since then; the membership count in 2014 of 12,585 is the second

lowest count over the past 25 years. While this may not be problematic given the history of membership fluctuation, it has financial implications for the annual operating budget. During the same period of recent membership declines there has also been an overall tightening of the Operating Budget – in part from declining memberships but also from higher meeting costs as well as other factors.

When the operating budget saw surpluses of \$200,000 to \$300,000, a dip in member revenues could be absorbed. Now that the gap between total revenues and expenses has narrowed, the continued decline of member revenues inflicts a greater impact upon the budget.

Briggs commented that, based on trends, it is likely that at some point the decline will bottom out and membership will rise again. However, meanwhile, if the Association continues losing \$95,000 each year, it will soon experience an annual budget deficit of over \$200,000. Although we have reserves to cover this, it becomes a concern because the financing for purchase of the office involves loan terms that require ASA to meet certain debt service ratio requirements. If those are not met, the organization is at risk of violating the covenant with the bank. Thus it is important for Council to be aware of the tight budget status in a period of membership decline.

C. Journal Subscription Report

Secretary Romero reviewed the status of traditional institutional subscriptions and member subscriptions. The decrease in membership subscriptions was anticipated when online access to all journals became a membership benefit in 2015. The traditional institutional subscriptions dropped by 3.7 percent (233 subscriptions) compared with June 2014 figures. However, these numbers are to be viewed from the larger context of new consortia subscriptions which SAGE has been growing. There were 24,524 total consortia subscriptions (an increase of 1,211 compared to 2014) to ASA journals through SAGE.

American Sociological Review continues to be the journal selected most often by new members. One hypothesis (not researched) is that new members, particularly students, are likely to select the flagship journal automatically, but are also more likely to select a specialty one when they renew the following year.

D. Membership Report

ASA membership as of July 5, 2015 is lower than June 30, 2014, by 739 (6.28 percent). Only two membership categories (regular members in the \$125,999-\$149,000 income category and emeritus/retired) have increased. The increase in emeritus/retired members is likely due to new engagement with retired sociologists from the establishment of the ASA Opportunities in Retirement Network (ORN). However, these increases have been significantly offset by decreases in other income categories, most notably the lowest income categories and Associate membership.

Romero indicated that ASA staff has been monitoring membership very carefully since the dues structure was changed. Two new benefits were added for the 2015 membership year; it is not clear if they have slowed the decline in membership but there is no positive impact as yet on reversing the decline.

It was noted that 2015 is the first year when ASA has offered free membership for first-year graduate students located in departments that are Department Affiliates. Publications and Membership Director Karen Gray Edwards confirmed that membership counts include those free membership, though no revenue is received. To date, close to half of the eligible students have activated their memberships. The ASA Customer Service representative is now in the process of calling the remaining students to point out the free offer.

Council members encouraged raising awareness of department chairs about this offer. One challenge is that everyone receives more email than they read. Edwards indicated that there has been an article in *Footnotes*, an announcement in the Member News & Notes, and a notice on the website. The current information sent to departments about the *ASA Guide to Graduate Departments* does include material about the benefits of becoming a Department Affiliate. One suggestion offered was to mail a promotional announcement to all graduate departments.

As discussion closed, Romero noted that those who are not renewing their memberships are mostly in lower income categories. Proposals for additional benefits will be reviewed later in the agenda, including providing TRAILS free to all members.

(1). Trends in ASA Membership by self-reported income

The Secretary complimented Research Director John Curtis on the clear and informative tables contained in his memo about trends in membership and asked him to present an overview of the analysis. Curtis indicated that the memo represented collaboration between the Membership and Research Departments, with membership staff providing the data and research staff doing the analysis.

The specific question being investigated was whether the trend in ASA membership by self-reported income levels was such that higher income levels are predominant. The basic finding was that, throughout the swings in total membership levels, the distribution by basic membership categories has remained steady over the period 2001 through 2014, the years for consistent detailed data is available.

Hillsman commented that the blunt question asked by Council at its last meeting was “is ASA becoming an association for the rich?” The data-based answer to that is No. Also, when the work on the dues restructuring was done, the primary goal was to let income categories catch up with inflation. The data show that the restructuring achieved what Council intended.

Council members expressed thanks for analysis that helped answer questions that rose in previous meetings and suggested that some version of the report be shared with the membership, perhaps via an article in *ASA Footnotes* by the ASA Secretary.

It was noted that information in the previous membership report seemed to show that there was a lot of churning in ASA membership, particularly in the student and low income categories. Curtis indicated that this issue was on the growing list of items for the Research Department to look at, as was the connection between membership and registration for the Annual Meeting.

(2). Member Dues for 2016

Member dues rates have not been adjusted since the dues restructuring in 2013. The inflation “creep” (2.8 percent) since the restructuring led the Executive Office to ask the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB) to consider an increase for 2016-2017. The proposed increase would not apply to certain categories of members (specifically, students, the two lowest income categories, International Associate, and Emeritus/retired). The Secretary reported that, at its July 2015 meeting, the EOB voted to recommend that Council approve a COLA increase for 2016 and 2017. This increase would result in additional revenues of \$45,000.

Hillsman reminded Council that dues increases are limited to COLA amounts per the bylaws; any increase above COLA has to be voted on by membership referendum. No increases have been proposed since the new dues structure took effect, in part because inflation rates have been extremely low. The sense of the discussion in EOB was to do a small inflation increase now to avoid a much larger inflation adjustment later..

Several Council members raised concerns with the level of dues and pointed to the fact that registration fees were raised by \$10 last year. By an online petition two years ago, members complained about high costs. It was suggested that Council should look at reducing services rather than pulling more money out of members’ pockets.

The proposed increases were examined in great detail, and it was noted that the percentage increase for lower categories was larger than for higher categories due to the way that the rounding up was done. Discussion ranged from increasing middle categories by \$5, which basically rounded the proposed adjustment down rather than up, to raising rates for higher categories and eliminating increases for lower categories. Some suggestions could not be implemented because no dues level can be raised more than a COLA amount.

There was recognition of price sensitivity among the membership, and that dues increases—regardless of amount—are symbolic. Some consideration was given to using reserves to cover the revenue gap(s). It was pointed out that the dues proposal covered two years; no raise would be proposed for 2017. Also, rates for five lower-income membership categories would remain the same.

A partial consensus was reached that it was better to adjust dues by small amounts regularly than implement a large increase in five years. The importance of communicating with members was emphasized, so that they would know that their cost concerns are being taken into account. An amendment was proposed to exempt the three lowest categories from a COLA increase, which would result in losing approximately \$2,500 in revenue.

MOTION: To exempt the RU, R1, and R2 categories of Regular membership from a COLA increase for 2016-2017. Carried (12-yes, 4-no, 1 abstention).

Discussion returned to arithmetic issue of whether to round proposed figures up or down. There was acknowledgment of the fact that many members probably decide which income category to pick based on what they want to pay. Despite an objection about getting into the weeds of EOB's work, a proposal was made to apply a COLA adjustment to R3-R9 categories of Regular membership and to the Associate member category by rounding to the nearest dollar.

MOTION: To round COLA increases to the nearest dollar on dues for the R3-R9 categories of Regular membership and the Associate member category. Carried (13 yes, 3 no, 2 abstention).

Before Council voted on the amended dues proposal, the Executive Officer gave a quick overview of expense structure of the association, which EOB has discussed in great detail. It was suggested that that analysis be shared with Council at its winter meeting.

MOTION: To approve the revised dues rates for 2016-2017. Carried (15-yes, 1 no, 2 abstentions).

(3). Job Bank Fees for 2016

The current Job Bank price structure has been in place since January, 2009. It was proposed to raise rates for job listings by a cost-of-living adjustment of \$2-30 to cover enhancements to the Job Bank to better serve both job seekers and employers. The new rates would begin in 2016. Departments that belong to the Department Affiliates program, however, will receive a larger discount on job listing rates, which will keep the listing cost about the same.

The current fee structure charges subscribers \$19.95 for 30 days of use. This rate has not been raised since the Job Bank launched in 2005. It was clarified that subscribers are non ASA members who pay for full access to the Job Bank by purchasing a 30-day subscription. (ASA members have free access to the Job Bank.) The new rate structure offers a discounted rate for non-member subscriptions longer than 30 days, which is intended to encourage ASA membership over subscription purchases. For example, the rate for 90 days of access to the Job Bank would be the same as a one-year ASA student membership.

No objections were raised to the proposed rate changes.

MOTION: That Council approves the proposed new listing fees and subscription rates for the ASA Job Bank in 2016. Carried unanimously.

Council took a short break at 10:19am – 10:34am, then quickly dealt with the matter of selecting the date for the next Council meeting (item 10B).

E. New Member Benefits

(1). TRAILS

Romero presented EOB's recommendation to make TRAILS a benefit of membership, beginning in 2015. The recommendation was based on the effort to enhance benefits for members and increase access to and use of TRAILS. The immediate budgetary impact is that ASA would lose approximately \$24,000 in revenue. However, it is believed that ASA would both retain some members because of free access to TRAILS and also gain some new members.

Academic and Professional Affairs Director Margaret Weigers Vitullo noted many of the users who currently subscribe to TRAILS are from lower income dues categories. A relatively small increase in the number of members joining ASA would cover the projected revenue loss for TRAILS. Adding free access to TRAILS for all members would definitely make a difference for member users and would help improve the quality of teaching by raising awareness of the publishing opportunity for teaching materials.

Vice President-Elect Barbara Risman commented that she had just finished 9 years in a department where courses are taught by graduate students and adjuncts, and free access to TRAILS would definitely be a good benefit for starting faculty and adjuncts. Graduate students might be more likely to renew their memberships if it provided TRAILS access.

MOTION: Council approves making TRAILS a benefit of membership in the ASA in 2016. Non-member subscriptions to TRAILS will remain available. Carried unanimously.

(2). New Sociology PhDs

At its meeting in July, the EOB Committee had an extended discussion about the decline in ASA membership over the last few years and how the Association could create a connection to new sociologists. One idea put on the table was whether ASA was in a position to consider providing a free one-year membership to new sociology PhDs.

EOB members felt it was in principle something the Association should do as a commitment to the profession. However, if ASA instituted such a gift membership program, there would be a loss of member revenue, estimated at approximately \$56,000 per year.

The proposed process for giving the free membership would be similar to that already in place for first-year graduate students in Department Affiliates. All PhD-granting sociology departments would be asked to create records (or flag existing ones) for new PhDs, with basic contact information. Using that contact information, the new PhDs would be emailed the link to complete the required membership information and activate their free membership.

Council members reacted positively to the proposal and pointed out that this could help ease the transition of young professionals into the Regular membership category from the Student rate. The Executive Office was requested to report back to Council on the usage of the benefit and whether recipients renewed their memberships in the following year.

MOTION: To approve giving new PhDs a free one-year membership to ASA and one section of their choice for the 2016 and 2017 membership years. Carried unanimously.

(3). Volunteer Opportunities in Collaborative Experience (VOICE)

At the initiation of the ASA Membership Department's newest staff member, the department developed a proposal to create VOICE (Volunteer Opportunities in a Collaborative Environment), a database that would provide a free online listing of opportunities through which non-profit organizations or individual projects with educational or public good benefits could seek suitable volunteers. Sociologists already active in community-oriented service could also solicit volunteers from the discipline through the VOICE site. For the growing number of emeritus and retired members in ASA, VOICE could be a resource for an array of possibilities for those looking for new opportunities to give back to the community. VOICE could also assist graduate students to gain workplace experience through volunteer activities that may be appreciated by potential employers.

The independent VOICE database would be built on the same conceptual platform as the ASA Job Bank, but with modifications unique to VOICE. The EOB Committee reviewed the proposal in July and approved a capital budget allocation to support the programming and development work, if the project received approval from Council.

It was noted that the newly established ASA Opportunity in Retirement Network (ORN) was very interested in supporting the VOICE project. In response to a concern about potential email promotions, Edwards confirmed that VOICE would be similar to the Job Bank in that respect; there would be no email blasts. Also, the volunteer listings would be reviewed before going public in the site.

In terms of timing, Edwards mentioned that there were a number of data-related projects already in the queue for 2016 and it was possible that implementation of the VOICE project would be deferred until the 2017 membership year.

MOTION: To approve adding VOICE as a member benefit. Carried unanimously.

3. Committee, Advisory Panel, and Task Force Appointments (Executive Session)

Council went into executive session (with staff) at 11:00am to discuss the report of the Committee on Committees and nominations from officers on appointments to committees, advisory panels, and task forces.

A. Nominations from the President, Secretary, Executive Officer

The President indicated that committee liaison assignments for Council members had been completed per the handout distributed at the Council meeting. Anyone who had questions was invited to speak to the President or Executive Officer.

The Secretary presented a list of nominees for appointment to the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB).

MOTION: To accept list of nominees for EOB. Carried (no opposed, no abstentions).

MOTION: To accept slates of nominees for MFP advisory panel. Carried unanimously.

MOTION: To accept slates of nominees for Honors Program advisory panel. Carried unanimously.

(1). Proposed Expansion of Spivack Advisory Committee

The Spivack Advisory Committee has responsibility for the selection and promotion of the ASA Congressional Fellowship Program and the Community Action Research Initiative (CARI) small grant program. The committee is, however, uniquely positioned to advise and assist ASA staff in raising ASA member awareness on and participation in science policy issues. For this reason staff proposed to increase the number of Spivack committee members from six to nine and increasing the number of Council liaisons from one to two.

MOTION: To approve expansion of the advisory panel and accept slate of nominees for Spivack advisory panel. Carried unanimously.

B. Nominations from the Committee on Committees (COC)

Concerns were raised that nominee lists included sitting members of Council, and it was noted that this problem occurred last year. Council affirmed that COC be reminded of the policy that Council members are ineligible for appointment to committees for which it has appointive authority. ASA governance staff was asked to drop all sitting Council members all COC lists of nominees.

MOTION: To approve the COC slates of nominees as amended. Carried unanimously.

The Executive Session ended at 11:30am.

4. Annual Meetings

A. President's Update on the 2016 Program

Milkman reported that the program was progressing well, including the plenary sessions, but that some speakers and topics were still in development. One exciting confirmed plenary is on the Black Lives Matter movement and will feature Rev. William Barber (NAACP), Kimberle Crenshaw (Columbia University), and Philip Agnew (Dream Defenders) as panelists, with Aldon Morris (Northwestern University) serving as presider.

B. President-Elect's Report on the 2017 Program Committee

President-Elect Michele Lamont reported that the theme of the 2017 Annual Meeting would be "Culture, Inequalities, and Social Inclusion Across the Globe." The text of the theme statement will be very clear that the focus is on changing cultures (not the culture of poverty).

Lamont outlined the proposed membership for the 2017 Program Committee and indicated a special effort had been made to have an expert on each of the continents on the program committee. Nominees were: Sada Aksartova, U.S. Government Accountability Office; David Grusky, Stanford University; David Harding, UC-Berkeley; Graziella Moraes Silva, Federal University Rio; Ann Morning, New York University; Yasemin Soysal, University of Essex; and Anna Sun, Kenyon College.

The carry-over member from the 2016 Program Committee will be Kristen Schilt, University of Chicago. Ex Officio members are: Michele Lamont (President-elect); Kathleen Gerson (Vice President-Elect; Mary Romero (Secretary); David Takeuchi (Secretary-Elect); and Sally T. Hillsman (Executive Officer).

MOTION: To approve the proposed members for the 2017 Program Committee. Carried unanimously.

It was noted that there was some excitement among sociologists that the Annual Meeting would be in Montreal and with Canadian-born president of ASA. Lamont indicated that the program committee would be making plans to co-organize/co-sponsor activities with the Canadian sociological associations.

C. Registration and Other Fees for 2016

Romero presented recommendations from the EOB Committee for no fee increases for registration and events/services for 2016.

MOTION: To approve maintaining current (2015) general registration fees for full member/non-member categories; for students and related categories (retired/emeritus, unemployed, secondary school teacher) at the 2016 Annual Meeting. Carried unanimously.

MOTION: To approve maintaining current (2015) fees for Courses, Employment Service Candidates (members & non-members) and Employers at the 2016 Annual Meeting. Carried unanimously.

5. Publications

A. Committee on Publications Report on Long-Range Planning

No report was given.

B. Report of the Committee on Publications

The Secretary reported that the Committee on Publications approved minor revisions in the mission statement for *Sociological Theory* (ST). The ST statement had not been updated in a long time, and the outgoing editor had been using the revised mission statement during his entire editorship. Efforts have commenced to find new editors for JHSB and SOE, and the committee's recommendations will come to Council at its winter 2016 meeting. The committee also established a subcommittee to help address ethical issues that editors encounter.

The Committee on Publications approved a member survey on archiving procedures and directed an accompanying recommendation to Council that submissions to all ASA journals from this point forward include a requirement for authors to write short statements on: IRB approval (whether required for their institutions), data-sharing, funding support for the research, and any conflicts of interest in research or funding. Information about the last item needs to be stated and appear as a footnote in the article.

It was noted that this requirement is consistent with the *ASA Code of Ethics*, and many journals already have such requirements.

MOTION: To approve the recommendation from the Committee on Publications. Carried unanimously.

(1). *Socius*

Romero reported that the new open access journal, *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, had launched. Among the differences between this online journal and the traditional ASA journals is that authors retain copyrights.

(2). *Contexts*

Discussion of this item occurred during the Council meeting held the previous day.

Council went into Executive Session at 11:54 – 12:04pm and then took a lunch break at 12:04 – 1:02pm, after which David Takeuchi, Pat White departed. A quorum remained.

6. Committee on Sections

A. Report on Sections

There were no new action items for Council to consider. Section Coordinator Justin Lini indicated that it had been a relatively quiet year for sections.

7. Updates from Status Committees

A. Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities in Sociology

The committee has been working on two research projects, both of which will inform reports to Council, as well as provide the basis for external publications.

The first project involves a content analysis of disability related topics on ASA Annual Meeting programs going back to the founding of the Association. This project is being led by committee co-chair Tom Gerschick. Thanks to his work and initiative, with support from ASA staff, all ASA Annual Meeting programs from 1911 to the present are now scanned and in a digital archive. A manuscript based on an analysis of papers presented during the first 15 years of ASA Annual Meetings has been submitted to a special issue of *Research in Social Science and Disability* focusing on the history of disability studies.

In addition, committee co-chair Sara Green is compiling all the recommendations that have come from the Status Committee (in its current and previous forms) since its inception in order to track how the ASA has responded to those recommendations over time, and how those actions have impacted the experiences of members with disabilities, those who do research in the area of disability studies, and their allies.

The staff liaison to the disability committee, Margaret Weigers Vitullo, noted that Council may need to revisit its charge to this status committee. Now that ASA has a section on disability studies, the scholarly side of the committee's charge is now being addressed elsewhere.

B. Committee on the Status of Women in Sociology

The Council Liaison to CSWS, Margaret Hunter, indicated that work on the results of the time in rank survey has concluded. While the survey questions were focused on the right concerns, there were issues with the way some questions were framed, as well as with who was asked to fill out the survey. As a result, the committee is now proposing to use the data as exploratory and as the basis for conducting a larger and more comprehensive survey for broader range of recipients.

Research Director John Curtis, the staff liaison to CSWS, indicated that an effort to collaborate with representatives of the American Political Science Association (APSA) on best practices for promotion of women was not proving fruitful. CSWS members felt that, after their review of the APSA report, the existing level of awareness and recognition of and commitment to

diversifying ranks in political science was not yet at the level to make the APSA proposed collaboration with ASA productive.

C. Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Persons in Sociology

Status committees are reviewed by Council every five years, at which point they may be renewed or retired. The last Council review of this committee occurred in February 2010. The most recent activity of the committee was making recommendations for changing the gender categories used for demographic information of ASA members. Council liaison to the committee Tina Fetner indicated that the committee still has work to do, as evidenced in the report available in the Council agenda book, and recommended that it be renewed.

MOTION: That Council renew this status committee for another five years. Carried unanimously.

Fetner presented a proposal to change the name of the status committee slightly to incorporate current terminology and strengthen its connection to a sociology caucus.

MOTION: That Council amend the committee's name to "Committee on the Status of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) People in Sociology" from "Committee on the Status of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Persons in Sociology" to reflect more current usage and mirror the name of the LGBTQ Caucus. Carried unanimously.

The draft of a mission statement, using the revised name of the status committee, was submitted to Council for approval, along with a request that the statement be displayed on the committee's page of the ASA website. The version below contains minor amendments mentioned in the Council meeting.

The purpose of the Committee on the Status of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) People in Sociology is to address topics pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer-identified members of the American Sociological Association. The committee addresses educational, workplace, disciplinary, research, and visibility issues pertaining to LGBTQ sociologists. The committee monitors these issues primarily through conducting formal research on specific questions, fielding concerns raised by ASA members of all sections, and through appointing liaisons to the LGBTQ Caucus and LGBTQ concerns committees in regional disciplinary organizations. The committee endeavors to respond to problems faced by LGBTQ sociologists through recommending formal and informal changes to the ASA Council and/or by providing information to ASA members.

MOTION: Council approves the proposed mission statement and authorizes it to be added to the status committee's webpage. Carried unanimously.

Fetner noted that the committee is participating in the review of *ASA Code of Ethics* to ensure inclusivity. She closed her report by indicated that Council could expect to receive language regarding the Association taking a stance toward gender neutral restrooms at our annual meetings.

8. Updates on Task Forces

A. Task Force on Community College Faculty

Margaret Weigers Vitullo presented a brief synopsis of the task force's work since it was established in 2012. The Task Force has built a list of 1799 community college faculty teaching sociology during spring semester 2014, fielded a lengthy online survey that achieved a 41 percent response rate, cleaned the data from the survey, and weighted the results for non-response bias. Task force members have now organized themselves into three writing teams, each of which is producing a data-based article to be submitted for publication in a special issue of *Teaching Sociology* that will focus on community college issues. Members of the ASA Research Department are on each writing team. The three articles will address: social justice and community college faculty; community college faculty and professional identify; and the particular challenges faced by part-time faculty in community colleges.

The Task Force's final report to Council in August 2016 will use the insights and understandings that arise from these articles, as well as additional analysis of the survey and other relevant data, to develop a set of specific recommendations to Council on how ASA can more effectively respond to the needs and concerns of community college sociology faculty.

Vitullo pointed out that this work represents a different model for what an ASA task force can do by focusing on the development of research that both benefits ASA and can be submitted to peer-reviewed publications. Council members commended the enthusiasm of the task force and affirmed the importance of teaching sociology in community colleges.

B. Task Force on *Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major*, 3rd edition

In August of 2014 Council approved a new task force charged with creating the third edition of *Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major*, which is the ASA's primary guide for departments of sociology regarding best practices for curriculum and program. To accomplish its work, the task force organized itself into three subcommittees, each with responsibility for one of three focus areas: online learning, employment outcomes, and the "core" in sociology. An open forum was held during the 2015 Annual Meeting to get feedback about the three topics.

The subcommittees reported to the task force as a whole during the Annual Meeting here in Chicago. The next step is for the task force to make decisions regarding the structure and format of the final product to be submitted to Council. The target timeframe for completing the work is January 2017.

A question was raised about using the word “liberal” in the title of the publication, as it implies a political perspective. Vitullo asserted that “liberal learning” is a state of the art term and actively used by the AACU. There is also a connection to liberal arts programs. Several Council members remained unconvinced and urged that the task force to consider revising the name of the guide. Vitullo indicated Council’s feedback would be added to the issues that the task force is considering, including whether the original 16 vignettes should be updated or a total reformulation of content should be undertaken.

Another key agenda item for the Task Force’s meeting in Chicago was discussing the Social Science Research Council’s Measuring College Learning (MCL) Project and its relationship to the Task Force.

9. Report of the Executive Officer

A. ASA High School Sociology Planning Program: Standards for High School Sociology

Vitullo referenced two documents in the Council agenda book, a memo supplying background on ASA’s involvement with high school sociology and the document containing the proposed standards for high school sociology, and she provided a short recap of the work to develop the proposed standards.

Over the past 18 months, the ASA High School Sociology Planning Program (HSSPP) team and its Advisory Board have worked to develop a strong, clear set of standards that would appropriately convey the essential aspects of the discipline at the secondary level, be widely acceptable, and be helpful to high school teachers. After much study and debate, the ASA team chose to take the view that effective high school standards for the discipline of sociology should define a set of shared essential *learning outcomes* for any meaningful sociology class at the regular high school level. Quite explicitly, the standards should *not* attempt to cover the full range of possible *content*.

In keeping with this view, the proposed ASA National Standards for High School Sociology are far less exhaustive than the 1998 draft standards, which included 14 domain areas and 193 specific learning outcomes. Instead, the proposed standards focus on four broad learning domains, each of which includes 3-4 assessable competencies. Each assessable competency is accompanied by 3-5 essential concepts representing the foundational knowledge students need in order to demonstrate the related competency. The high school standards also included an appendix with additional enrichment concepts for each domain that teachers can choose to incorporate into their courses as they judge appropriate given the length of their course, their own interests and areas of expertise, and the needs of their students.

HSSPP co-directors Hayley Lotspeich and Chris Salituro (who teach sociology in Chicago high schools and lead a Chicago-area sociology group) were present at the Council meeting to answer questions. It was noted that this model of “standards” is in keeping with current research in pedagogy—including by sociologists—that suggests fewer topics, studied in depth,

produce far better student learning outcomes. Salituro emphasized that having standards for high school sociology helps create accountability, as well as introduces students to both what sociology is and what sociologists do thereby correcting misperceptions (e.g., that we are socialists or social workers). Lotspeich pointed out that because Illinois state standards were not often revised (1985 and 2015, to be exact), there was a strong possibility of submitting standards approved by the national disciplinary association. High school sociology, which is really about social structures and relationships, is taught by teachers who are often in isolation. Sociology is not just introducing an important area of study to students, it is also providing information to their parents.

Past President England expressed gratitude to Lotspeich and Salituro for their work and perseverance over the past five years. She commented that proposed standards seemed scientifically sound and were very similar to templates being constructed by the Task Force on Liberal Learning.

Hillsman commended the approach to standards setting that provides guidance on conceptual frameworks but lets instructors handle what specific content is presented in classes. This approach provides flexibility at the classroom level yet accountability with to the discipline, which is an ideal strategy.

In response to a question about how frequently sociology is taught as a separate course in high school, versus being part of a social studies course, Salituro indicated that when he started teaching high school in 1999, there were six independent sections of sociology every semester. That has now dropped to four sections each semester. In schools that have a social studies department, different disciplinary areas compete for space and time in the curriculum. If there are no sociology standards to reference, many departments will not offer courses.

Other comments from Council members affirmed the importance of setting these standards because if ASA does not do this, someone without sociological expertise will, or there will be no sociology at the high school level. Strengthening the job market for sociologists who have all levels of professional training means ensuring sociology is taught as a discipline at the high school level. It also means that more young people will be exposed to the sociological framework for understanding self and society regardless of their future career choices.

<p>MOTION: Council approves the ASA National Standards for High School Sociology. Carried unanimously.</p>

Noting that approving the standards might be the most important thing done in its meeting, Council expressed its appreciation to Lotspeich and Salituro for their work.

B. Public Affairs and Public Information (PAPI)

PAPI Director Brad Smith referred Council to his report that contains data on ASA's public information and public affairs activities for the first half of the year. ASA, its journals, and/or its members were mentioned in hundreds of articles between January 1 and July 1, 2015. Sociological studies were not the only things PAPI successfully publicized. The amicus brief ASA

filed with the Supreme Court in support of marriage equality was mentioned in more than 25 articles. ASA's social media activity has also increased thanks to Johanna Olexy, who is @ASANews.

C. External Grants

After assuring Council that the eight active research projects are proceeding well, Curtis provided an update on two pending projects, an ADVANCE proposal and a mentoring pilot. While the ADVANCE proposal was not approved, there is likely to be another opportunity to submit a revision next year. NSF is still working out what it is looking for from scholarly societies because this was the first year NFS opened the ADVANCE program to their proposals. ASA also received approval for the work it proposed for an MFP-based mentoring pilot as part of a larger NIH grant (funding support of \$50,000 to ASA for two years). Work on the pilot will get underway promptly; the first set of workshops is scheduled for November.

D. Technology

Deputy Executive Officer Janet Astner referred Council members to the report contained in the agenda book updating progress on the website redesign and status reports on other small technology-related projects. The transition to Foundant, a grant application software, is already in progress for ASA's small grants program. The software will be used to handle applications for FAD grants at the end of the year, and for applications to the Minority Fellowship Program at the end of January.

Hillsman indicated that the focus has been to use technology strategically in order to free up staff time to do those things that only staff can do.

E. Updates:

(1). Executive Office Staffing

There were no major changes to report.

(2). COPE Revision of the *ASA Code of Ethics*

Hillsman reported that the COPE subcommittee was moving forward on identifying areas of the Code that may need revision. There have been no updates or revisions since 1997. The subcommittee has started by contacting all aligned associations to get suggestions and information, sections have been asked for feedback, and a special email address has been set up for members to submit input. The first goal is identify areas that need revision, or that should be added. Then work will commence on the language for the revisions. The process will include a significant period of time for the membership and Council to review the proposed revisions and make suggestions and changes. Once Council approves the final version, it will go to the membership for approval.

A question was raised about whether ethnographic work is addressed in the Code. Hillsman indicated that research conduct, methodological strategies, and oversight of

research/researchers are dealt with in different places within the code. It was suggested that COPE should be looking at ethical issues surrounding the retention and destruction of all types of research data.

Discussion ranged into recent media coverage of a sociologist's ethnographic work and whether the association should be responding in any way. The President noted that this topic was new business and deferred discussion to later in the agenda.

(3). Minority Fellowship Program

Minority Fellowship Program Director Jean Shin reported that he six newest MFP Fellows (Cohort 42) and their respective organizational "designations" were announced in the July/August 2015 issue of *Footnotes*. The new cohort met for the first time at the Annual Meeting, starting with a long day of orientation.

One of the interesting notes from this year's meeting was that the MFP ribbon worn by Fellows fundamentally changes their meeting experience, in a positive way. ASA staff and MFP Fellows are extremely committed to the future of the MFP program, and Shin thanked Council for its continuous support and the allocation of funding support from Spivack.

(4). Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

The original end date of the ASA subcontract to Stanford's NSF grant for the postdoctoral program was February 28, 2015, with a final project report due at the end of May. However, Stanford filed for a one-year no-cost extension in order to try to fill its unused fellowship slot; the ASA evaluation also needed for more time. ASA has begun the next steps in the research and evaluation process that includes tracking the Fellows as well as the applicants for the Fellowship who did not receive funding. The new end date for the ASA subcontract is now February 28, 2016, with the final project report due at the end of May 2016.

Council took a short break at 2:52pm – 3:09pm, at which point Cecilia Menjivar and Mike Murphy departed. (A quorum remained.)

10. New Business

A. ASA Business Meeting Resolutions

The only resolution from the ASA Business Meeting to Council was about contingent faculty. While there was insufficient attendance at the meeting for a quorum, Council's practice is to discuss Business Meeting resolutions although it is not required to do so.

There was some support among Council members for the spirit of the resolution, but not necessarily for all the specifics recommendations. One recommendation was that Council move to establish a task force to investigate contingent employment in the academy. ASA's Research Director commented that he was already considering what data and analyses on the status of contingent employment in sociology could be useful to ASA. He has considerable

experience with existing data and analyses on this topic from his work at AAUP. Some Council members were inclined toward the idea of a task force, especially if the charge was for the task force to collect and analyze data and information and to present these to the members and Council for discussion. It was noted that the Association has no obvious levers to push for changed conditions for contingent faculty, and that Council has not yet discussed contingent work in sociology as a policy matter for the Association. Other Council members preferred to defer discussion to the winter meeting, due to lack of time to identify and digest all the issues.

A motion was made to establish a task force; it was subsequently amended by the proposer to ask ASA staff to research the subject between now and next Council meeting so that Council could use that information to decide whether a task force would be useful, and if so, what its charge would be.

MOTION: To ask the ASA Research Director to (1) prepare a summary report on the state of knowledge about contingent employment in sociology; (2) resurrect the report from the previous task force on contingent faculty; and (3) in consultation with officers, draft a possible charge(s) for a new task force for consideration by Council at its next meeting. Carried unanimously.

It was suggested that the submitter of the resolution be informed that Council is continuing its consideration of the issues that were raised.

B. Date for Winter 2016 Council Meeting

Proposed dates for the winter Council meeting took into account that in late February 2016 the EOB Committee would be making its decision on the candidate it would recommend to Council as the next Executive Officer. Council members indicated their availability for dates in early March, and the weekend of March 12-13 was selected.

C. Other New Business

1. Nominations process of Council Members-at-Large

Per the ASA Bylaws, Council Members-at-Large are responsible for developing lists of nominees to run for election to the Committee on Nominations (CON). These council members meet every year during the Annual Meeting to fulfill this obligation. Although the work of generating names and ranking them is handled quickly and efficiently, though support by ASA staff, Council members involved expressed some dissatisfaction with the process. They felt not enough was known about potential candidates, and names were not available in advance. One challenge is how to expand the range of members included in the nominations process.

A suggestion was made to set up a small working group to consider new ways to accomplish the work of nominating CON candidates and report back to Council at its next meeting.

MOTION: To set up a Council subcommittee to review the nominating processes used by Council Members-at-large and make recommendations for for Committee on Nominations candidates. Carried unanimously.

The President asked for volunteers to serve on the subcommittee. It was suggested that the most recent outgoing members of Council be tapped to serve on the subcommittee, along with Past President Menjivar. Tina Fetner was designated to shepherd the group.

2. Space request

Council Member Hunter raised a question about how to have a space at every annual meeting where sociologists could gather to address late-breaking news stories. For example, at this year's meeting there was a loosely formed *Sociologists for Justice* group that wanted to talk about the shootings in Ferguson, Missouri.

ASA staff provided information on some options. If a member wants access to session space on the formal program during core convention hours, it is necessary to work with that year's President and Program Committee. However, if a member is just looking for meeting space to gather with others informally about a topic, space can be provided at the close of the day's formal program through the "Other Groups" meeting arrangements process.

3. Ethics and ethnography

Discussion commenced with differing viewpoints expressed about the feasibility of having a program session/panel to discuss ethics and ethnography issues recently highlighted in the media. An alternative approach might be to focus more broadly on issues in qualitative research generally. It was noted, however, that a formal program session, whether on the 2016 or 2017 program, would not occur in a timeframe that would be seen as responsive to a current news issue.

A two-pronged approach was raised as a possibility—a more immediate and media-savvy response to specific issues, followed by program sessions over the next year or two. The discussion produced no consensus on what such an immediate response would be beyond a statement from ASA on relevant part of the ASA Code of Ethics which would not be effective from a news viewpoint. Professional media are not interested in various perspectives on methods, and social media responses would be likely to continue their own reflections. Hosting an online symposium on ethnography with invited contributors via the Speak4Sociology blog was considered but deemed difficult to monitor appropriately.

Discussion of many ideas continued. The emerging consensus was that the Association should (a) provide an outlet for professional dialogue about ethnography in sociology (including ethical issues) that was available to the general public and that (b) Council should establish a small working group to immediately develop a specific method for doing so. The group could be comprised of people experienced with speaking about sociological research to the public.

MOTION: To create a working group to explore strategies for responding to ethics and ethnography issues recently highlighted in the media and make proposals as soon as possible for Council consideration via email or conference call. Carried (12 yes, 0 no, 1 abstaining)

The President asked for volunteers to serve on the working group.

MOTION: To appoint Karyn Lacy (chair), Michele Lamont, Barbara Risman, Tanya Golash-Boza, and Margaret Vitullo to serve on the working group.
Carried (13 yes 0 no, 0 abstention).

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Council, President Milkman adjourned the first meeting of the 2015-2016 ASA Council at 4:24pm on Wednesday, August 26, 2015.