

Minutes Of the First Meeting Of the 2004-2005 ASA Council

Wednesday, August 18, 2004
8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Members Present: Rebecca Adams, Kathleen Blee, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Michael Burawoy, Esther Chow, Troy Duster, Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, Jennifer Glass, Deborah King, Rhonda Levine, Nan Lin, Victor Nee, Ann Shola Orloff, Caroline Persell, Bernice Pescosolido, Lynn Smith-Lovin, Diane Vaughan, Bruce Western, Franklin Wilson, Min Zhou.

Staff Present: Lee Herring, Sally Hillsman, Carla Howery, Michael Murphy, Roberta Spalter-Roth.

1. Call to Order

ASA President Troy Duster called the first meeting of the 2004-2005 ASA Council to order at 8:35 am on Wednesday, August 18, 2004 in the San Francisco Hilton Hotel. Duster noted that due to the full agenda, informational items stand as written without further elaboration.

2. Report of the President

Duster congratulated Michael Burawoy for his tirelessness commitment during the last year as ASA President. Not only did he work to construct an engaging Annual Meeting program with captivating speakers and sessions, but he also traveled widely to state and regional sociological associations and other groups to market the program. Council applauded Burawoy for his efforts and leadership as President.

3. Report of the President-Elect

President Duster called upon President-Elect Cynthia Fuchs Epstein to present the Report of the President-Elect.

A. Approval of 2006 Program Committee

Epstein reported that the President-Elect must hit the ground running immediately after election in order to begin selecting the meeting theme and members to serve on the Program Committee. She reported that her early thinking was to have the 2006 Annual Meeting focus on the boundaries that mark every aspect of our lives, and how those boundaries can create conflicts among individuals and at the group level. The discipline of Sociology contributes a great deal to understanding and breaking down boundaries, which in her view made this a likely focus for her 2006 Annual Meeting. She noted that she would refine these ideas following discussion with the Program

Committee. Epstein presented a slate of proposed candidates for appointment to the 2006 Program Committee. Association Bylaws stipulate that:

The Program Committee shall consist of nine to eleven persons: The President-Elect, serving as Chair, the Vice-President-Elect, the Secretary, and six to eight other members of the Association selected as follows: Each year, the Council will appoint four to six members from a list presented by the President-Elect. Two of these members shall be appointed for two-year terms and others for one-year terms.

The proposed 2006 Program Committee would exceed the Bylaws limit of eight members. Duster called upon Epstein to outline her reasoning for selecting these individuals and for exceeding the limit by one. Several members asked specific questions about the implications of the proposed action, ultimately deciding to proceed as requested.

Council voted to approve the appointment of the following people to serve on the 2006 Program Committee, and to temporarily waive the Bylaws limitation on number of people who may serve on this committee: Cynthia Epstein (Chair), Paul DiMaggio, Joan Fujimura (carryover), Ron Lembo (carryover), Mitch Duneier, Michele Lamont, Val Moghadam, Mari Simonen, Lynn Smith-Lovin (Vice President-Elect, Edward Telles, Steve Vallas, Franklin Wilson (Secretary). (14 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions)

4. Report of the Secretary

President Duster welcomed Franklin Wilson to his new role as Secretary of the Association. Wilson reported that he was honored and pleased to be able to serve as Secretary of the Association, and was grateful to past Secretary Arne Kalleberg for his help during the transition year. Wilson noted that a key issue for him is fiscal constraint and cost containment. He reported that he would work hard to reign in the costs of operating the association while expanding services to members.

A. Journal Subscription Rates for 2005

In 2004, institutional subscription rates were increased \$10 for quarterly publications and \$20 for bi-monthly publications, primarily to offset the cost of putting the journals online through Ingenta. Wilson reported that at this time he was recommending that Council increase institutional subscription rates for 2005 by a COLA of 3.1%. There was no discussion or disagreement.

Council voted unanimously to increase institutional subscription rates for ASA journals by a 3.1% COLA adjustment.

B. Non-Member Subscriptions for ASA Journals

The subscription rates for non-member individuals are \$75 for quarterly journals and \$90 for bi-monthly journals. ASA has been encouraging non-member individual subscribers to join ASA instead and subscribe at member rates, which is an advantage to both the individual and the Association. Most non-member individual subscribers are either non-sociologist academics or sociologists not in sociology departments. The cost of an Associate membership for these subscribers plus one quarterly or bi-monthly ASA journal subscription in 2004 is \$69 to \$74, below the cost of subscribing as a non-member.

Wilson recommended, therefore, the elimination of the non-member individual subscription option for all journals except *Contexts* and *City & Community*, as it would not be financially beneficial to individuals

Council voted to approve eliminating non-member subscription rates for all ASA journals except *Contexts* and the Section journal *City and Community*. (1 abstention)

C. Member Subscription Rates

ASA has not used member subscriptions to journals as a way of making money, but has instead priced member subscriptions to ASA journals at cost. Subscription rates for ASA members have not been adjusted, even by a COLA, since 1999. A review of costs associated with journals in 2001 was conducted in November 2002, indicating that the cost to produce several of the journals exceeded the member subscription rate. Since the review of 2001 journal expenses, both direct and functional expenses have increased through inflation and through increased technology (e.g., the online access through Ingenta). Therefore, Wilson reported that he was recommending a \$10 for members and \$5 for students subscription rate increase for each of the ASA journals except for *Contexts* and *City & Community*. The proposed COLA would increase revenues by approximately \$28,000. The Publications Committee felt that an exception should be made for *Contexts* and recommended that Council should consider increasing the ASA subsidy to *Contexts* to ensure its long-term viability.

Wilson noted that the proposed \$5 increase for student members meant that the cost for students to hold membership in the ASA would increase between 13.89% and 17.86% (the difference due to the range of prices for the different ASA journals). He noted that for members in the highest income category the \$10 increase was equivalent to 2.58%. He commented that it did not seem reasonable to him for student members to bear a greater burden of the proposed increase. Executive Officer Hillsman responded that the Association significantly subsidizes the cost of subscriptions for students. Currently regular members of the Association pay \$35 for a journal subscription, while student members pay \$20 for the same subscription. Members of Council raised several related issues regarding current student journal prices.

President-Elect Epstein commented that *Contexts* is a magazine rather than a professional journal and therefore must be viewed differently than the other ASA

journals. The original motivation for *Contexts* was to open up sociology to a broader audience. She suggested that Council consider that people will decide whether or not to subscribe to *Contexts* in the same way they make decisions about other magazines, which is different than how they decide to subscribe to professional journals.

Wilson reported that the current primary consumers of *Contexts* are ASA members. The Publications Committee is pleased with the way members have embraced *Contexts*, but note that this is a change in philosophy from the original intent of the publication.

Hillsman reminded Council of a significant discussion at the 2004 winter Council meeting, in which Council agreed to a revised 10-year business plan for *Contexts*. That plan called for bringing the magazine into balance (i.e., income equals expenses) in 10-years. In discussion with the publisher, University of California Press, the publisher and the Executive Office recommended that ASA incorporate modest subscription price increases into the revised business plan, which both EOB and Council supported.

One Council member commented that in her view, it was perfectly reasonable for an intellectual society to subsidize the cost of journals for its members. At some point the cost will lead to fewer subscribers. She added that she saw no need to separate *Contexts* from this discussion and exempt it from a \$10 increase at this time. Another member, however, disagreed urging that *Contexts* receive extra assistance while it was becoming established. That view, however, did not convince others who noted that Council is already substantially subsidizing *Contexts* during the first 10-years, and moved that the \$10 and \$5 increase in journal rates apply to *Contexts* as well. Council separated the motion and voted in two parts.

As recommended by the Committee on Publications, Council voted to increase the individual subscription rates for all journals except *Contexts*.

A separate motion was introduced to increase the cost of subscribing to *Contexts*.

Council voted to approve increasing the subscription rates for *Contexts* by the following amounts: \$10 for regular members, \$5 for student members, \$5 for non-members, and \$14 for institutional subscribers. (12 in favor, 1 opposed, 4 abstentions)

D. Membership Dues for 2005

In July, EOB voted not to propose a COLA adjustment for member dues in 2005 if Council approved the proposed increase in journal subscription rates. Because Council adopted the journal subscription rates increase (see above), it followed the EOB's advice to retain the 2004 membership dues rates for 2005.

E. Proposed Audit Committee

On the recommendation of the Association's auditors, Council considered establishing an audit committee. Based on earlier EOB discussion, Secretary Wilson recommended that Council appoint EOB to serve as the Association's Audit Committee. There was no objection to this proposal.

On the advice of the ASA auditor Council voted unanimously to appoint EOB to serve as the Association's Audit Committee.

F. Financial Support for Minority Fellow

For several years ASA has added one fellow to the Minority Fellowship Program each year, in addition to those covered under the T-32 Training Grant from the National Institutes of Mental Health. As reported yesterday, we are in the final year of current funding and a renewal proposal for an additional five years is pending with NIMH at this time.

In order to advertise the program for 2005, a decision was required on whether or not Council was willing to fund an additional non-NIMH MFP fellow. EOB estimated that the total cost from ASA general funds for the commitment to current fellows will be approximately \$50,000 through 2006. The addition of one new non-NIMH fellow to be selected in the spring of 2005 would add an additional \$20,000 to the amount committed, totaling \$70,000 through 2007.

Council voted unanimously to approve funding one new non-NIMH MFP fellow (to be selected in the spring of 2005) from the ASA General Fund.

5. Report of the Executive Officer

Executive Officer Hillsman reported briefly to Council, noting that additions her report at yesterday's Council meeting appeared in several places on the current Council agenda and would be presented in turn. She reported that she and the Executive Office continue their outreach to aligned associations, looking to the Centennial as an opportunity to embrace the diversity of the sociological community. She thanked Michael Burawoy for his outreach effort to the regional and state associations in preparation for the 2004 Annual Meeting.

6. Centennial Planning

In follow-up to Council discussion last year, Executive Officer Hillsman presented the new logo commissioned for the ASA Centennial. She noted that this logo would be used extensively in marketing the Centennial Annual Meeting.

Redesign of the ASA website is proceeding as planned. One goal of the redesign is to improve the functionality of the site and make it easier for members to navigate. The

Centennial logo will be added to the site at the start of the new year when the first Centennial content is premiered.

Last year Council commissioned an update to the 1980 Rhodes History of the ASA. Outside assistance was secured and a draft update has been prepared and circulated for comment. Hillsman reminded Council that the updated history would be published online rather than in print form. She added that following the Centennial a CD-ROM will be produced with the updated history and numerous other resources related to the Centennial of the Association.

In addition to the update of ASA History, *Teaching Sociology* is planning a special issue in honor of the Association's Centennial. At this point, no other journals are planning special commemorations of the Centennial.

Craig Calhoun is continuing work on the volume on sociology in America requested and supported by Council. He is in negotiations with a press to publish the volume. The goal is to have the volume ready for the August 2005 Annual Meeting so that the book may be marketed in conjunction with the Centennial.

The Section on History of Sociology is also preparing a book on *Plural Histories of Sociology*. The Committee on Publications agreed to treat the section's volume as an ASA publication so long as it did not involve any expense on the part of the ASA. Calhoun has been in contact with the section and reported that he saw no conflict between the two volumes.

Hillsman reported that the ASA has been approached by the CartoonBank.com, which holds rights to all images published in the New Yorker magazine over the last 75 years. CartoonBank has recently started to work with associations and companies to produce customized cartoon books that are branded books designed to reflect a humorous insider-view of the world.

CartoonBank proposed producing a hard cover volume with 80-90 cartoons. With more than 85,000 cartoons to draw from, they believed that it would not be difficult to find 80-90 cartoons of interest to sociologists. The book would be branded with ASA's name and Centennial logo and a forward written by someone in the ASA (e.g., President). Based on the proposal and her analysis, Hillsman suggested Council consider producing a volume of New Yorker cartoons to be available to members as soon as possible but especially during the Centennial year.

Several members of Council voiced support for the proposal and volunteered to participate in selection of the cartoons to be published. Others concurred in their desire to see the project move forward. Secretary Wilson expressed reservations and concerns about the proposal. He indicated that it would be easy to find cartoons about academics, but quite difficult to find cartoons specific to sociology. He added that it could be difficult to sell sufficient copies of the book to breakeven. Another

member disagreed, noting that the Marxist Section had easily sold more than 200 t-shirts during this Annual Meeting. Another member added that the cartoons would focus on social institutions and social processes, and would be of great interest to members.

Responding to questions about cost, Hillsman reported that this venture would require a \$36,000 upfront investment and a unit price of \$18 if we produced 2,000 copies. Increasing the print run to 3,000 copies would drop the unit price to \$16, giving us more of a range for pricing. Members suggested going for a higher print run to bring down the unit price, believing that the books would sell well. Wilson reiterated his concern that this was not a wise way to spend member money.

Council voted to authorize contracting with CartoonBank.com, a subsidiary of the New Yorker Magazine, to produce a hardcover collection of 89 New Yorker cartoons in conjunction with the ASA Centennial Celebration. President Duster will select a small sub-committee of Council to work with the Executive Office to determine the content of the volume and to assist in determining the specific print run. (13 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention)

7. Annual Meeting Issues

Janet Astner, ASA Director of Operations and Meeting Services, reported to Council on the recently completed Annual Meeting as well as issues related to future meetings. By last count, which is unaudited, there were 5,557 registrants for the 2004 Annual Meeting. This not only exceeds the record for previous San Francisco meetings, it also sets a new all time high point for registrations for any Annual Meeting.

All service areas were exceeding busy this year. The Employment Service saw more interviews in the first two days than during the entire 2003 meeting. A total of 1,500 interviews were scheduled. There were 351 candidates, 79 employers, and 114 positions advertised.

Astner presented a proposed \$10 registration fee increase for the 2005 meeting, noting that services members are increasingly demanding (e.g., LCD projectors) are expensive. The increasing usage of such equipment is having a big impact on our costs in conducting the Annual Meeting.

Council voted to approve the following increases in Annual Meeting fees for 2005: a \$10 across-the-board increase in Annual Meeting registration fees; and a \$150 increase in the fee for the DAN party. (14 in favor, 1 abstention, 1 opposed)

Astner reported that ASA met its contractual obligations at the Hilton for the 2004 meeting. The situation with the Parc 55 is not resolved but hopefully we will meet

our obligations there as well. Both hotels were sold out on Friday and Saturday night, which frees ASA from any liability for room block not met on those nights.

ASA and the hotels prepared a package of incentives marketed to members for the 2004 meeting to encourage meeting attendees to stay at one of the two conference hotels. The same approach will be followed with the Philadelphia meeting. In Philadelphia there are not as many small hotels near the convention site, giving members fewer alternatives. However, Philadelphia is also located such that members in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Washington could conceivably attend the meeting and return home at night.

A Council member noted that members decide where to stay based on cost. He asked if there was any way to decouple sleeping room rates from the cost to ASA for meeting facilities. Astner responded that decoupling sleeping room rates would obligate the Association to pay separately for meeting space rental. The fees for meeting space rental in the two properties for the 2004 meeting would have cost approximately \$300,000, which would have to be recovered by increasing the registration fee. Astner added that the ASA meeting makes heavy use of hotel meeting facilities.

Several years ago the Annual Meeting was reduced from five days to the current four-day model. Several members of Council asked if returning to a five-day meeting would help to alleviate some of the space problems experienced in recent years. Some suggested that Council consider returning to a five-day format; there was discussion but no agreement on this suggestion. Increasing the length of the meeting also increases the size of the room block the association must meet.

Different meeting venues were suggested as another alternative to reducing sleeping room cost and meeting room cost. Members suggested exploring second-tier cities such as Phoenix and Cleveland as possible meeting locations. Others responded that the move to such cities would involve a change of planes for most travelers and would draw fewer attendees. In addition, the ability to find sufficient convenient hotel and meeting space in many smaller cities is very limited.

Council expressed its appreciation to Astner and all Executive Office staff on their work in making the 2004 Annual Meeting such a successful event for members.

8. Information Technology Updates

Executive Office staff continue to work with JL Systems on the development of an e-commerce site to sell ASA teaching resources, publications, and logo products. Development and testing of this site will resume following the Annual Meeting.

In March of this year, Executive Office staff embarked on a complete overhaul of existing network servers. Existing servers were aging and no longer efficient or reliable. The upgrade is 95% complete.

The current office telephone system is more than 10 years old and increasingly difficult to maintain. Vendors no longer make that particular system or any of the parts needed to maintain the system. With EOB's approval, Executive Office staff has explored options and selected a new Nortel phone system to replace the current antiquated system.

The Annual Meeting submission and program system provided by All Academic functioned well for the 2004 meeting. Given positive feedback from members, the same system will be used for the 2005 meeting.

9. Committee on Sections

Director of Governance and Sections Michael Murphy reported on the status of Sections within the Association. As of the close of the Annual Meeting yesterday afternoon, section membership totaled 20,179, just 90 memberships short of where we closed the 2003 membership year. With six weeks to go before the 2004 membership year closes, the chances are quite strong that we will surpass 2003 Section membership levels.

A few sections remain below the mandated 300-member level, but for the most part those sections have not changed substantially. Burawoy commented that Sections are one of the most wonderful things about the ASA and urged Council to do nothing to tamper with the current Section system. He noted that some Sections would never become large entities, but they were nonetheless vibrant groups that contributed to the value of the ASA. Murphy reported that the Committee on Sections reviews all sections below the 300-level for the vitality of their programs and other activities.

A. Sections-in-Formation

One Section currently holds Section-in-Formation Status: Ethnomethodology and Conversational Analysis. That Section-in-Formation was granted a one-time, one-year extension last year in order to recruit the necessary 300 members. At the time of this meeting that Section-in-Formation was nearly 100-members short of attaining its goal. If it does not reach 300-members by September 30th, it will lose its Section-in-Formation status.

A proposal has been received for the establishment of a new Section-in-Formation on Evolution and Sociology. Murphy reported that this proposal had been reviewed by the Committee on Sections, which recommends Council approve the establishment of this new Section-in-Formation.

On the recommendation of the Committee on Sections, Council voted to approve creating a new Section-in-Formation on Evolution and Sociology. (10 in favor, 0 opposed, 6 abstentions)

B. Section Awards

Current Council policy limits the number of awards a section may present each year to three. Sections have pushed this guideline by establishing four or more awards and presenting some in alternate years. Section officers urged the Committee on Sections to revisit the limit of three awards. The committee reviewed this proposal and voted to endorse the idea and send it to Council.

Members of Council voiced differing views on the proposal, some overwhelmingly in support of honoring the work of Section members through awards, while others were concerned about diminishing the value of Section awards. A friendly amendment was offered to limit a Section to giving an award to no more than five people in a year. A second friendly amendment was proposed which replaced this earlier amendment: Sections are limited to presenting "five single category awards per year."

Council voted to accept the friendly amendment to change the term "5 awards" to "5 single category awards per year." (13 in favor, 1 opposed, 3 abstentions)

There was no additional discussion on the revised proposal.

On the recommendation of the Committee on Sections, Council voted to increase the maximum number of awards a section may present each year to five single category awards per year. (13 in favor, 1 opposed, 3 abstentions)

10. Executive Office Reports

Written and brief oral reports were provided on key Executive Office functions, including the Academic and Professional Affairs, the Minority Affairs Program, Research on the Profession, Spivack Program, Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline, Public Information, Public Affairs, and Archives. There were no questions on these reports.

11. Committee Appointments

A. Appointments to the Committee on Executive Office and Budget

Michael Aiken's term on the Committee on Executive Office and Budget will expire on December 31st so a replacement is required. Secretary Wilson proposed a ranked slate of candidates for this opening and sought Council's approval.

Council voted unanimously to accept the list of replacement candidates for the one vacancy on the EOB.

B. Appointments to ASA Advisory Boards

Executive Officer Hillsman proposed slates of ranked candidates for appointment to the ASA Advisory Boards, including the Minority Fellowship Program Advisory Committee, Sydney S. Spivack Program in Applied Social Research and Social Policy Advisory Committee, and the Honors Program Advisory Committee.

Council voted unanimously to approve the ranked lists of replacement candidates for the ASA Advisory Boards.

C. Appointments to ASA Components

Earlier during the Annual Meeting, the elected members of the Committee on Committees met to review vacancies on ASA components and to propose ranked slates of candidates to fill those vacancies. The committee worked to ensure that there was diversity in ethnicity, geography, type of institution at which employed, institution, gender, and area of interest on each of the committees. The committee acknowledged that this was not always possible since often members they knew from underrepresented groups or institutions were not members of the Association and therefore were ineligible for appointment. Members of Council suggested one deletion from the list as well as adjustment in the ranking of three other lists.

Council voted unanimously to approve the ranked lists of replacement candidates for ASA components, as amended.

12. Reports from Status Committees

A. Status Committees on GLBT Persons and on Women in Sociology

Based on extensive written reports submitted earlier, Council was favorably inclined to renew the status committees on Women and on GLBT for an additional five years.

Council voted unanimously to extend the status committees on Women and on GLBT for an additional 5 years.

B. Postponement of Decision on Additional Status Committees

The Chair of the Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities in Sociology resigned his position earlier this year. Therefore, that committee asked for an extension for submission of a report.

The Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in Sociology met earlier during the Annual Meeting and will be drafting a report for submission to the January 2005 Council meeting.

Council voted unanimously to postpone a decision on renewing the status committees on Racial and Ethnic Minorities and on Disabilities until its January 2005 meeting, pending receipt of a report on committee activities.

13. Reports from Task Forces

A. Task Force on the Institutionalization of Public Sociology

In light of discussion at yesterday's Council meeting and of the fact that Council's support of the initial efforts of this Task Force, discussion was limited.

Council voted unanimously to affirm their confidence in what the task force is doing, and to ask that they submit a more detailed budget proposal if needed.

B. Task Force on the Advanced Placement Course

Caroline Persell presented an informational final report on the Task Force on the Advanced Placement Course. The Task Force has made a number of accomplishments, including the preparation for a college-level course outline and resource materials, for use in high schools. Unfortunately, negotiations with the College Board to offer an Advanced Placement (AP) course and exam in sociology have not succeeded. Sociology is "in the queue" but a course and exam under College Board auspices is several years away. The Task Force has ended its term and individual members will continue to work on curriculum materials. The Executive Office, through Carla Howery, will coordinate this work and insure posting on the website. She reported that the Task Force had completed its charge and was prepared to retire.

Council voted unanimously to accept the report of the Task Force on the AP Course in Sociology, and to thank the members of the task force and Carla Howery for their two years of work on this issue.

C. Task Force on the Undergraduate Major

Carla Howery presented the final report of the Task Force on the Undergraduate Major. She reported that the task force extensively revised an existing document, which focuses on a series of 16 recommendations. The report is a discussion and elaboration of those recommendations. Once accepted by Council, the report will be disseminated to departments, used in workshops, and as a guideline for program reviews. The report makes recommendations for departments to consider and not requirements. Caroline Persell noted that the earlier report was extremely helpful to departments; she encouraged Council passage of the report.

Council voted unanimously to accept the final report of the Task Force on the Undergraduate Major, to disseminate the report to departments for their information, and to thank the members of the Task Force for their hard work.

14. 2004 Budget Analysis and Review

Franklin Wilson provided a brief update on the 2004 budget through June 30th. He noted that a large portion of ASA expense occurs in the latter half of the year following the Annual Meeting. Through the end of June the ASA budget is on track as projected. There were no questions.

15. New Business

A. Selection of Dates for Next Council Meeting

EOB will meet over the weekend of January 7-9, 2005 in Washington, DC. Because Inauguration Day is January 20th, one of Washington's busiest weeks/weekends, and SWS will hold its annual meeting over the weekend of January 29th and 30th in Florida, Council selected February 5-6 for the winter Council meeting.

Council voted to hold their next meeting February 4th through 6th, 2005 in Washington, DC.

B. Selection of Federal Scientific Advisory Committees

Executive Officer Hillsman reported that University of Colorado sociologist Jane Menken, Director of the Institute of Behavioral Science in Boulder, had served on the grant-reviewing National Institutes of Health Fogarty International Center Advisory Board for her two-year term (2000-2002) when she inexplicably did not win reappointment. She indicated that Many colleagues and others in the science community (e.g., Union of Concerned Scientists) and on Capitol Hill (e.g., Rep. Henry Waxman of Calif.) are convinced that her situation is a direct result of the Administration's disregard for the importance of the integrity of science in policy making. Because Menken's personal views on controversial matters are different from those of the Administration (particularly on the issue of abortion and use of legal contraceptives), many believe Menken's treatment is symptomatic of a large-scale disdain for objective science in the Bush Administration, a claim that has received national and international press attention at least since 2002.

Hillsman reported that the general issue of U.S. government appointments to scientific advisory bodies has been ongoing since the early days of the Bush Administration, beginning with its Advisory Committee on Human Subjects Research. This situation has now resulted in a major effort by the National Academy of Sciences to develop a report (the third since 1992) on how to improve the process of presidential appointments to advisory committees and policy positions within federal agencies. Public testimony

(including from Rep. Waxman) to NAS was heard in mid-July, and the report is to be released after the fall national election.

The overwhelming sentiment within the scientific community is that when there is a pattern of scientific findings based on solid or reasonable data that are at odds with the viewpoints of the Administration, the scientific reports are being ignored, removed from government websites, misinterpreted or criticized based on political or ideological grounds rather than on a lack of scientific foundation. Policy issues in which there is any hint of ambiguity in the underlying science (e.g., the role of anthropogenic causes of global warming) are especially subject to these uncertainties being exaggerated and disparaged by the Administration. Through the Union of Concerned Scientists, more than 4,000 scientists, including 48 Nobel Prize winners and many members of the National Academy of Sciences have publicly challenged the Administration as distorting science.

The White House (including the Office of Science and Technology Policy) has vigorously and continually denied charges that the credibility of science is systematically being undermined by the Administration or that permanent harm to federal science policy will result from its practices.

The Consortium on Social Science Associations (COSSA), of which ASA is a founding member and permanent member of the Executive Committee, has prepared comments to the NAS committee preparing its report on Federal Advisory Committee Appointments. As indicated above, the NAS will release its report after the fall election.

Council debated whether or not to make a statement on this issue or on the general issue of the government's use of scientific credentials in selecting members of science advisory committees. Council has previously made similar statements when NIH grants were threatened, affirming that peer review, not politics, should be the deciding criteria.

Lee Herring read a draft statement for Council consideration. Members agreed with the statement in principle but requested rewording of the statement. President Duster agreed to review the re-drafted statement with the President-Elect and the Immediate Past President before going forward.

Council voted unanimously to adopt in principle a statement on the importance of scientific credentials in the government's selection of Federal Scientific Advisory Committee members, with editing of the specific language to be resolved after the meeting.

The following statement was released following the meeting:

The American Sociological Association (ASA) strongly urges the President of the United States to consider scientific expertise as the primary basis for soliciting and nominating or appointing advisors to scientific, technological, and health-related posts or governmental advisory committees. Upon recommendation of its governing Council, the ASA believes no criteria other than scientific expertise should play the dominant role (implicitly or explicitly) in the President's decision about whom to select for such permanent or temporary positions. By adhering to professionally recognized scientific expertise in selection, the Administration, government agencies, and the American people will receive the best scientific knowledge and advice available when our nation formulates significant policy decisions. Such scientifically informed decisions can and should assure the continuation of America's prominent position within scientific, technological, and health research domains as well as protect America's international credibility and leadership within these areas. Accordingly, the ASA Council directs the ASA Executive Officer to take appropriate public actions to help ensure that scientific expertise is the primary consideration in such appointments, as a means to help protect the influence of America's critical scientific, technological, and health science enterprises.

C. Vetting Scientists for International Bodies

Executive Officer Hillsman reported that an issue closely related to the matter of US executive branch selection of scientists for federal advisory groups is the policy of vetting consulting scientists selected by international bodies in which the United States holds membership. The scientific community is concerned about the US government's rejection of scientists who it believes do not agree with current U.S. government policy on particular scientific matters. This includes participation in international scientific bodies by scientists employed by the government unless senior political appointees approve them. The scientific community generally believes this prevents these bodies from receiving the best scientific expertise as determined by the scientific bodies themselves.

She reported that in a recent conversation with former ASA President Douglas Massey, she learned that as a sociologist/demographer of international repute, he had been asked to write a chapter in a forthcoming publication by UNESCO on an aspect of international migration. Apparently, when the US rejoined UNESCO, he was told that the formal agreement contained the right of the US government to approve all US persons consulting with or doing work for UNESCO. Following this, Massey was told that the U.S. has disapproved his invitation and he could not make a contribution to the publication.

Hillsman reported that she had followed up on this indirectly through various contacts with professional associations and the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to persons closely connected with UNESCO. Initial evaluation suggests

Massey was subject to rejection by the U.S. government, but time has not permitted a detailed documentation of the events.

She indicated that the National Academy of Sciences Board on International Science Organizations (BISO) will address this issue at its upcoming meeting in October. Council debated whether or not to make a public statement on this issue and to bring that statement to the attention of BISO. Council agreed that making a general statement would be helpful, but agreed that a specific statement regarding a prominent sociologist was premature.

Council voted unanimously to authorize making a public statement on the issue of vetting scientists for international bodies, and to bring this statement to the attention of the National Academy of Sciences Board on International Science Organizations.

The following statement was released after the meeting:

The American Sociological Association (ASA), an organization of nearly 14,000 scientists, has grave concerns about reports from a number of affected individual scientists as well as in the press about the U.S. government's vetting of eminent scientists who have been asked by international bodies such as UNESCO and the World Health Organization (WHO) to contribute their scientific expertise on matters vital to health and related concerns in communities in the United States and around the world.

On behalf of the Association, the ASA Council strongly urges the President of the United States to advise his appointees—such as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)—to ensure that the U.S. Delegation to UNESCO, the Director of the HHS Office of Global Health Affairs (OGHA), and other such U.S. government representatives, do not interfere with the choices made by international bodies seeking expertise and input from recognized U.S. scientists. As a professional and learned society, the ASA believes that demonstrated, peer-recognized scientific expertise rather than adherence to particular policy positions is the criterion of selection that will ensure international bodies of importance to the United States receive the most useful knowledge available from our country's scientific community.

The ASA urges the President through his Secretary of HHS to suspend the unique and unprecedented interpretation of Public Health Service Commissioned Corps and Civil Service regulations (as described in an April 15, 2004, letter from HHS OGHA Director William Steiger to Denis G. Aitken, of the WHO, announcing that the Director of OGHA will now determine, in consultation with federal agency leadership, which

scientists will be approved to participate in WHO's expert panels). The clear implication of this directive is that scientific expertise of U.S. scientists is destined to be, at best, a secondary criterion, and, at worst, an ignored criterion, yielding its critically important value to the inappropriate influence of "preferred" policy or political considerations.

Similarly, we urge the President to direct the U.S. Delegation to UNESCO to refrain from vetting U.S. scientists—duly selected by UNESCO for their expertise—based upon whether the delegation views their presumed policy or political views to be consistent with current U.S. policy. The ASA views this as dangerous position because the U.S. scientific community at large has worked for many decades to build, bolster, and protect the longstanding international scientific credibility and leadership of the United States. Even the impression that U.S. scientists chosen as experts are only providing knowledge that supports existing U.S. government policies on WHO panels, in UNESCO or other such venues, at the expense of sound science, would initiate an intolerable descent of American science's heretofore unmatched prestige and influence on the international scene. The inevitable result will be fewer invitations for U.S. scientists to contribute to scientific discourse at the international level and the consequent lessening of U.S. influence and relevance.

D. Statement and Recommendations on Visa Problems

Hillsman reviewed recent changes in the U.S. government's processes for granting visas to foreign scholars and students that have resulted in significant unanticipated and undesirable consequences for American higher education and science. As a result, in May of this year, 22 American organizations in science, engineering and higher education signed a *Statement and Recommendations on Visa Problems Harming America's Scientific, Economic, and Security Interests* (see attached).

The process of assembling the initial signatories was rushed; consequently many active and concerned professional associations were not initially contacted. Since that time, nine additional associations have endorsed the statement. Council considered whether or not ASA should join the other associations in signing onto the statement.

Council voted unanimously to authorize adding ASA to the statement by scholarly associations urging changes in the U.S. Visa process. (16 in favor)

16. Executive Session

Council entered Executive Session for approximately 5 minutes at 3:35 pm.

17. Adjournment

With no additional business for consideration, this meeting of the ASA Council was adjourned at 3:40 pm.