

**2011-2012 ASA Council First Meeting
Minutes**

Wednesday, August 24, 2011
Caesars Palace, Las Vegas, NV

Officers Present: Catherine White Berheide (Secretary), Randall Collins (Past President), Jennifer Glass (Vice President-Elect), Cecilia Ridgeway (President-Elect), Edward Telles (Vice President), Erik Olin Wright (President)

Officers Absent: David Snow (Past Vice President)

Members-at-Large Present: Sarah Fenstermaker, Jennifer Lee, Amanda Lewis, Cecilia Menjivar, Joya Misra, Monica Prasad, Mario Luis Small

Members-at-Large Absent: David Brunisma, Sandra Smith, Laurel Smith-Doerr, Sarah Soule, Robin Wagner-Pacifici

Staff Present: Janet Astner, Les Briggs, Karen Edwards, Sally T. Hillsman, Kareem Jenkins, Olga Mayorova, Michael Murphy, Jean Shin, Brad Smith, Roberta Spalter-Roth, Margaret Weigers Vitullo

1. Introductions and Orienting Documents

President Erik Olin Wright convened the first meeting of the 2011-2012 ASA Council at 8:44am on Wednesday, August 24, 2011.

A. Approval of the Agenda

The reports from the Committee on Awards and the Member Giving Subcommittee, which were deferred from the prior Council meeting, and one new publications item were added.

MOTION: To approve the agenda as amended. Carried.
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B. Reports Deferred from the Previous Council Meeting

(1). Member Giving Subcommittee

Council member Sara Fenstermaker, chair of the Member Giving Subcommittee, reported that the Teaching Enhancement Fund (TEF), the Community Action Research Initiative (CARI), and the Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline (FAD) are being considered as a trio comprising a small grants program for the Association's next effort to encourage member giving. The subcommittee intends to give greater exposure to the trio via the ASA website, *Footnotes*, and other promotional materials as part of two-year concerted effort to focus member charitable giving on these three small grant funds. Another goal is to make it easier for members to donate in installments.

It was noted that the only time that ASA asks members to give to support ASA programs is during membership renewal. The total payment that point is usually relatively large, especially if a member is both renewing membership and registering for the Annual Meeting. Members are not necessarily likely to contribute when the total at one time is high. Providing opportunities to give at other times of the year, or in installments, was encouraged, as was providing members a choice and range of donation opportunities.

MOTION: Council supports a two-year member-giving effort focused on the three small grants programs (FAD, TEF, CARI) beginning early 2012. Carried.

(2) Committee on Awards

The Committee on Awards (COA) convened after all nine award selection committees met during the Annual Meeting. The experience with this year's Awards Ceremony was reviewed, as were issues and recommendations from the selection committees. COA was delighted that this year's ceremony ran precisely on time.

The award plaques were redesigned this year, and COA has authorized further redesign of recognition materials in order to personalize awards. Attendees had noticed that the certificates were of varying sizes, and Governance & Information Systems (GIS) Director Michael Murphy indicated that this was due to experimenting with different styles. Feedback from Council members was that smaller plaques were better, given the limited wall space in many faculty offices.

Murphy reported that COA received but took no action on a recommendation to change the title of the current ASA Dissertation Award to "Outstanding Dissertation Award". There was agreement in Council regarding COA's decision.

B. Conflict of Interest Statement

Executive Officer Hillsman reminded new Council members to sign and turn in the Conflict of Interest form.

2. Report of the Secretary

A. Summary Review of the 2011 Budget

Secretary Berheide reported that it looked like the 2011 Annual Meeting budget would be in good shape due to the good attendance in Las Vegas coupled with the contractual support negotiated when the site relocation occurred. In general, there are no red flags in the ASA budget, though EOB had hoped that revenues would have rebounded a little bit more.

B. Membership Report

(1) Dues for 2012

The referendum to change the dues structure change passed solidly in the recent ASA election; 27% voted against it. Most changes will be implemented for 2013. In the meantime,

however, dues rates for 2012 must be set. EOB recommended a COLA increase for next year; see Table 1 below. This small increase has the virtue of moving the dues up to 2013 levels in two small increases for most members except those in the highest income categories.

Table 1: 2012 Proposed Dues Rates

Dues Category	2006 (2.8% COLA)	2007 (4.2%COLA)	2008 (2.7%COLA)	2009 (4.9% COLA)	2010 --	2011 (2.2% COLA)	2012 (3.6% COLA)
Unemployed ¹							\$20
Under \$20,000 ²	\$ 22	\$ 23	\$24	\$25	\$25	\$26	\$27
\$20,000-\$29,999	\$ 23	\$ 24	\$25	\$26	\$26	\$27	\$28
\$30,000-\$39,000	\$ 60	\$ 63	\$65	\$68	\$68	\$70	\$73
\$40,000-\$54,999	\$106	\$110	\$113	\$119	\$119	\$122	\$126
\$55,000-\$69,999	\$147	\$153	\$157	\$165	\$165	\$169	\$175
\$70,000 and over	\$164	\$171	\$176	\$185	\$185	\$189	\$196
Associate	\$ 39	\$41	\$42	\$44	\$44	\$45	\$47
International Associate			\$42	\$44	\$44	\$45	\$47
Student	\$ 17	\$18	\$18	\$19	\$19	\$20	\$20
Emeritus	\$ 39	\$41	\$42	\$44	\$44	\$45	\$47

¹In 2012, "Unemployed" members are eligible for reduced section dues and journal subscriptions (same as student subscription rate)

²Under \$20,000" members are eligible for reduced section dues but pay regular member subscription rates for journals.

MOTION: Council approves 2012 dues rates as shown in Table 1. Carried.

It was recommended that some attention be paid to marketing the addition of the Unemployed category of membership that will be introduced in 2012.

(2) Benefit for Emeritus Members in 2012

Emeritus members will receive online access to all ASA journals in 2013, but EOB recommended implementing that benefit a year early as part of efforts to encourage emeritus members to stay involved with the Association. No objections were raised by Council members.

It was noted that the mentoring component for the MFP program could draw on emeriti. Another avenue might be to invite emeriti to put their teaching materials into TRAILS, especially since experienced scholars are often experts in special niches where easily available teaching materials for non-experts may be lacking. Another suggestion was to encourage COC and CON to include emeritus members as part of the range of inclusion and diversity efforts for the work of those nominating groups.

MOTION: To give online access to all ASA journals as a benefit of Emeritus membership in 2012. Carried.

(3) Profile of Membership

ASA membership was slightly higher in mid-year 2011 than it was last year, and a modest increase in total membership for 2011 is anticipated. The most significant increase is in the emeritus membership category (11.78%), which is particularly positive as this category had the largest decline in 2010. The increase is probably a result of the move to a more flexible process of transitioning to the emeritus category (allowing retired members to do this online, with a staff review following the online renewal).

The percentage of online renewals and new member applications continues to grow (88 and 91 percent, respectively). This is good for members and for keeping expenses and staff costs low.

A question was raised regarding how to answer complaints about ASA dues being higher than other associations. The Secretary responded that among social science associations, only AEA rates are lower. The extremely low AEA rates are possible because AEA makes a tremendous amount of revenue on article indexing, enough to support the entire association and journal budgets. When ASA rates are compared to AAA, APSA, and other similar association, dues are right in line or better than other groups. ASA student rates are almost always lower. Also, some associations have a mandatory requirement for belonging to a section and then charge large amounts for those section memberships.

C. Journal Subscription Report

While membership in 2011 has increased by 5.3 percent so far, journal subscription by members are lagging behind at 3 percent. For institutional subscriptions, Sage reports that ASA journals are being renewed by libraries at a higher rate than other journals.

(1) Rates for 2012

The Secretary reported that subscription rates for 2012 have already been set. ASA's publishing partners (SAGE and Wiley-Blackwell) required approval of 2012 rates in May in order to include ASA journals in their marketing materials to libraries for renewal. Since the Secretary is empowered in the ASA Constitution to take action between Council meetings, Berheide approved an 8% rate increase—the minimum under the publishing contracts—on behalf of EOB and Council. At its meeting in July, EOB concurred with this process, unless a significant policy issue arises during future year deliberations.

Because this timeframe will not change in the foreseeable future, Council was asked to consider whether it wanted to be involved in approving subscription rates in the spring via conference call or email vote. It was the sense of the meeting that the Council was comfortable with the decision-making process and that the Secretary should continue to deal with this matter on Council's behalf.

D. Footnotes

The transparency about ASA financial matters that some members raised during the winter/spring when the proposal for changing the dues structure was raised with the membership highlighted that many members appear not to be reading *Footnotes* on line as thoroughly as they might. The move two years ago to an online-only newsletter was a response to budgetary pressures, although ASA staff also felt that the newsletter's online presentation could be upgraded to be more readable as well as accessible. Nearly 700 members in 2010 opted "in" to receive print copies of *Footnotes* and this rose in 2011. Initially, it was expected that most members would read the newsletter online but many asked for print copies.

Now that ASA staff have improved analytics to judge online readership, it has become clear that the vast majority of members are not reading the newsletter online. These data, coupled with widespread but anecdotal information that members and ASA leaders are putting the

email notification of a new *Footnotes* issue available online on their “follow-up” but then not following up with a fuller examination of the content, reinforced the view that’s members read more selectively electronically and miss important information.

Council discussion referenced the fact that different generations often have different preferences on print v. online options. Any return to a print format must be accompanied by giving members a clear choice to opt out of receiving printed copies.

MOTION: Council approves a return to printing and mailing copies of *Footnotes* in 2012 to all members who have not chosen to opt out of receiving print copies. Carried (12 yes, 1 no).

3. Committee, Advisory Panel, and Task Force Appointments

A. Nominations from the President, Secretary, Executive Officer

President Wright presented the assignments of Council members to serve on Council subcommittees and as Council Liaisons to various standing committees and task forces. He requested that members notify the Executive Officer if any changes are needed.

Secretary Berheide presented a rank-ordered list of nominees to be used to fill the upcoming vacancy on the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB). Experience with the association and with organizational budgets was an important criteria used in developing the proposed list.

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

Executive Officer Hillsman distributed information on nominees for advisory panels on the Honors Program, the Minority Fellowship Program, and the Spivack Program. It was noted that the MFP panel needed two replacements plus one additional member, given the new scope of responsibilities for that panel.

MOTION: To approve the nominees for advisory panels. Carried.

B. Nominations from the Committee on Committees

Governance Director Murphy presented the report from the Committee on Committees (COC), a Bylaws committee, with elected members serving two-year terms, whose work is to prepare lists of nominees to be appointed by Council to various ASA committees.

While reviewing the proposed lists, Council members noted that some lists contained names of sitting Council members. Since ASA policy prohibits Council members from serving on committees/boards for which they have appointive authority, there was immediate consensus to strike all current Council members from the COC lists. President Wright requested that COC be reminded of this policy at its next committee meeting.

MOTION: To approve the COC report as amended. Carried.

Past President Collins reiterated Council's recommendation that COC to consider nominating emeriti/emeritae and suggested that COC have access to a current list of Emeritus Members.

4. Annual Meetings

Before proceeding to the report on the 2012 Program, President Wright gave an update on the new ASA Wikipedia Project that commenced earlier in the year. The project, which has little cost for ASA, interfaces with an NSF-funded Carnegie-Mellon Wikipedia project to provide a Wikipedia portal on the ASA website. This portal has two objectives: to make it easy for sociologists to upgrade sociology entries in Wikipedia as well as add missing areas/topics, and to engage professors in learning how to give Wikipedia assignments as coursework. The instructions for using the portal were designed by the Carnegie-Mellon group that received the NSF grant; ASA is the second academic association to be involved.

Because Wikipedia articles are descriptive, students must collect information and figure out how and where to add an article or a couple paragraphs to an existing article. Students were excited about fact that term paper content could end up in Wikipedia. Wright noted that one professor included a citation to his Wikipedia article in his curriculum vitae and described the peer-reviewed process involved, and the university recognized it as valid scholarly content, somewhere between a publication and a service contribution.

The heart of the peer-to-peer editing processes is mediated by groups monitoring Wikipedia content. According to Wright, most wikigroups are very caring, collegial groups that recognize there is a need for accuracy but not consensus. Instead, the priority is to present contending points of view accurately.

The Executive Officer noted that the teaching side of this project has the potential to be robust. Representatives from state associations and community colleges have indicated eagerness to join in the project. ASA will be looking to other associations to become involved as well, including SWS, as the project can be a service work option for members. One interesting element is that all discussions are archived in the "sandbox," so participants can see the record of development and involvement. Participation in the Wikipedia project can also help students develop a critical thinking approach to information on the internet.

It is anticipated that the Wikipedia project will be up and running this fall on the ASA website on some basis. The Wikimedia Foundation is coming to the 2012 Annual Meeting and will have an interactive booth in the ASA exhibit hall for attendees to get hands-on experience.

Before continuing with the scheduled agenda, Council took a short morning break at 10:26 – 10:45am.

A. President's Update on the 2012 Program

Wright indicated his intention to preside at all the plenary sessions to tie them together. At the first plenary, there will be a 30-minute spoken word performance, essentially a poetry slam on social justice. This impetus comes out of a UW program and may involve students from Denver high schools.

Twenty Thematic Essay sessions are being planned for 2012. The expectation is that the essays on real utopia models will be posted online in January to provide an open dialogue with members. Annual Meeting attendees can then come with already developed ideas and responses to engage in active dialogue during the sessions. While there will be prepared presentations to open the session, the hope is for an hour to be devoted to discussion. In addition to the essay sessions, there will be fifty Thematic panels on all topics.

Other featured sessions include a Presidential Panel where three people are asked to answer the same question: What does it mean to be a progressive in the 21st century? There will also be a disability/utopia session, organized by Jeffrey Hauser, who has invited President Wright's mother to participate, given her importance in the history of disability studies.

On the social event side, Wright expressed enthusiasm for a square dance party/event. ASA meeting staff is working on this to block off the street between the hotel and the convention center. The square dance party will be followed by a jam session, where all types of music are welcomed. Attendees will be encouraged to bring instruments so they can participate. Families with kids will be welcome to bring the kids to the party. This is just one way in which Wright hopes to infuse the spirit of utopia theme into the format of the conference.

B. President-Elect's Report on the 2013 Program Committee

President-Elect Ridgeway reported that "Interrogating Inequality: Linking Micro to Macro" is the basic theme for the 2013 meeting. The Program Committee expects to look at multi-dimensional levels of inequality, from substantive issues and historical intersections to methodologies and more. It was noted that the Methodology Section members were excited that there was thematic interest in methodology.

The following list of proposed members for the 2013 Program Committee was presented for Council's approval: Roberto Fernandez, David Harris, Ross Matsueda, Jane McLeod, Devah Pager, Barbara Risman, Sandra S. Smith, Robin Stryker, and Kjersten Whittington, with ex-officio members Jennifer Glass (ASA Vice President-Elect), Catherine White Berheide (Secretary), and Sally T. Hillsman (Executive Officer)

MOTION: To approve the proposed members for the 2013 Program Committee. Carried.

C. Registration and Other Fees for 2012

The 2012 meeting fees recommended by EOB contained no increases. Council members advised that this fact should be pointed out when members are informed about the COLA increase in 2012 dues.

MOTION: To maintain current (2011) general registration fees with no increase for 2012. Carried.

MOTION: To maintain the current (2011) fee structure with no increases for Seminars, Courses, and the Employment Service. Carried.

D. Special Proposals for Future Annual Meeting Sites

Meeting Services Director Kareem Jenkins outlined the criteria for evaluating meeting sites and explained that one outcome of the 2011 site relocation was special offers for future meetings from several cities. In particular, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles have presented ASA with special offers that include additional benefits for 2018, 2022, and/or 2023. Since ASA would be booking much further in advance than the usual four to five years ahead, Council needs to discuss whether the benefits offered are significant enough to warrant consideration at this time.

The normal geographic rotation pattern has ASA looking to meet in the central US for 2018. Minneapolis meets that geographic criterion though more northerly than some other central locations. Dates of Saturday-Tuesday, August 10-14, 2018, were proposed. Most of the convention center rental costs would be offset through room rebates from hotels and a contribution from the convention bureau, leaving ASA responsible for approximate \$24,000. One challenge with the site is that ASA would have to use eleven hotels in the vicinity of the center, leaving options for sister societies' meetings from seven blocks to five miles away.

Philadelphia submitted two offers, one for a single year (2018 *or* 2023), and one for two years (2018 *and* 2023). While the city clearly does not qualify for the central geographic rotation currently scheduled for 2018, it has been a good meeting site for ASA, and the dual year option offered significant cost reductions in convention center costs. Booking one year left \$32,000 in rental costs for ASA to cover, while booking both years reduced the bill to a negligible \$1,100.

The Annual Meeting has grown since 2005, when activities were squeezed into three downtown hotels in Philadelphia. Using the Philadelphia Convention Center, along with space at the adjacent Philadelphia Marriott hotel, is the only workable option for ASA to meet in Philadelphia in the future.

In thinking about future rotations, Chicago has been the only really workable site in the central US, according to some Council members. The advisability of staying out of the hurricane belt during hurricane season eliminates cities such as New Orleans, Houston, Miami, etc. Toronto might be considered as either central or eastern, but its convention center is not conducive to ASA's session-heavy meeting because of the distances between the two main buildings with meeting space. If a decision was made to go east (i.e., to Philadelphia) in 2018, the future east/central/west geographic rotation assignments could be revised to mark 2020 as central and 2021 as eastern.

Other central sites were discussed, many of which cannot handle a meeting of our size. Nashville was raised as potentially a "central" location, and Jenkins indicated that it is on the list for future consideration after the new convention center is built. St. Louis was mentioned but received little support because of the lack of excitement in the downtown area. Minneapolis has become an increasingly appealing city and meeting venue, but its proposal for 2018 was not as attractive as others on the table.

Discussion moved to the Los Angeles bid for 2022, which provides complimentary use of the convention center along with rebates to help cover other costs, plus convention bureau marketing funds to help draw attendees. LA Live is a new development downtown with the Staples Center and a new JW Marriott, and more hotels are scheduled to be built by 2013.

There was general agreement that downtown LA is finally developing a livable and lively downtown since the last time ASA met in there in 1994.

MOTION: To select Los Angeles as the site for the 2022 Annual Meeting, pending a favorable outcome to the final contract negotiations. Carried.

There was sentiment to proceed with making a decision on 2018, especially given the amount of work involved in developing proposals from suitable sites. The special considerations offered in the multi-year proposal from Philadelphia were enticing, and the city is easy to get to and less expensive than New York City. Members also reported liking the city for the ASA Centennial Annual Meeting. A straw poll of Council members showed that Philadelphia was heavily favored over Minneapolis.

MOTION: To select Philadelphia for 2018 and 2023, provided final contracts are concluded favorably. Carried 10 yes, 3 – no.

There was consensus that the future rotation assignments would be changed to reflect the intention to meet in a central site for 2020.

E. Fair Sourcing

Chairs of ten ASA sections submitted a letter urging that ASA Council pass a resolution endorsing the fair sourcing of convention material. While this direction is worthwhile, current cost comparisons are not always favorable, sometimes ranging up to five times higher. For example, the tote bags referenced in the letter were priced at \$3.50 apiece while recent recyclable bags have cost from 99 cents to \$1.20 each. Meeting Services was encouraged to continue to look for competitively priced fair sourcing products.

Council then took a break for lunch at 12:15pm to 1:00pm.

5. Publications

A. Report of the Publications Committee

The Secretary briefly relayed several items discussed by the Publications Committee. First, the journal *Teaching Sociology* (TS) has been excluded for 2010 and 2011 from the annual *Journal Citation Reports* because of higher than usual percent of self-citations. The current editor is working on revised guidelines to authors to reduce this percentage and SAGE has filed an appeal on SAS's behalf. Second, SAGE has reported that journal articles with podcasts associated with them have significantly more downloads than those that do not, so SAGE is encouraging ASA editors to suggest forthcoming articles that would be appropriate for podcasts..

There was an update on the issue of electronic dissemination of articles prior to publication. Many authors now want to post their papers on the web (on home institution or social science websites), and some academic institutions are requiring that they do so. ASA's journal policy has considered such postings as a "publication" making the paper ineligible to be submitted to ASA journals. The Committee on Publications has now changed the policy to read that posting on a web *peer-reviewed* site as the criterion for exclusion.

Another update to the ASA Publications Committee publishing policy is that, if a paper is posted in other locations on the web, authors are instructed to add a notation that the paper is forthcoming in X journal after it has been accepted for publication. Then after the article is published, authors are instructed add a link to the published article of record.

The Publications Committee also recommended allocating additional pages for JHSB, 30 extra pages for 2011 to reduce the transition backlog and 8 additional pages for 2012 for policy briefs in each issue. At a cost of \$90 per page, this will increase journal costs by \$2700 for 2011 and \$720 for 2012.

MOTION: To approve the additional page allocations for JHSB. Carried.

The outgoing Rose Series editors have proposed that they be allowed to continue to shepherd those manuscripts commissioned during their term. Any costs incurred will be incorporated into the current editorial office budget.

ASA is working with ICPSR on setting a standard for how to cite data sources for data analyzed in articles. This effort will start with ASR.

The Publications Committee had an extensive conversation about *Contexts*. In general, subscriptions to ASA journals are up, but there was a drop for *Contexts* that was worrisome. Now that *Contexts* is bundled by SAGE, there is hope that schools will pick it up as part of the package. The new editors wanted to expand to four colors inside the journal, pay a journalist to write articles, among other changes. The cover of *Contexts* is currently four-color, and the Publications Committee declined the request to move to a four-color interior and felt other innovations with financial implications should be presented as part of the standard budget request process. The Publications Committee also requested an exception to the policy of ASA not paying for course release time for one of the *Contexts* editors because a significant problem arose at her institution.

MOTION: To approve a waiver of ASA policy to permit the Executive Office to pay release time for one current *Contexts* editor. Carried.

The Publications Committee has also begun discussing other issues that are arising with host institution financial or in kind support for ASA journals. Host institutions have often provided journal editorial offices with graduate student assistants. Now, as more institutions are asking for some or all of the costs of such assistants to be reimbursed by ASA, the cost of editorial offices is not only rising but also increasing at very different rates based on the policies and costs at particular host institution. Depending on the type of help needed by an editorial office, similar editorial office help can often be hired outside the university much less expensively. The Publications Committee is concerned about this.

The Secretary reported that as part of a move toward establishing guidelines for editorial office budgets, the Executive Office will be considering the principles that currently underlie the ASA policies about what the Association pays for and why. An update will be provided at the next Council meeting regarding further discussion of this matter during the winter Publications Committee meeting.

Council accepted a proposal that it consider of an item of new business (regarding reducing journal manuscript review times in sociology journals) while it was discussing publication matters. [Notes on that discussion are in the minutes under 9C below.]

6. Committee on Sections

Three existing Sections-in-formation achieved the necessary membership and submitted bylaws for approval. The Committee on Sections (COS) recommended that Council approve the bylaws for Inequality, Poverty and Mobility; Sociology of Development; and Altruism, Morality and Social Solidarity.

MOTION: To approve the proposed Section bylaws. Carried.

COS recommended approval of a proposal to form a new section-in-formation on Consumers and Consumption.

MOTION: To approve the proposal for a new section-in-formation on Consumers and Consumption. Carried.

The last item of Section business was a request to approve the Family Section's amendments to its bylaws.

MOTION: To approve the bylaws amendments proposed by the Section on Sociology of the Family. Carried.

7. Reports and Updates from Task Forces and Status Committees

A. Final Report: Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in Sociology (CSREMS)

Minority Affairs Program Director Jean Shin, who serves as the ASA staff liaison to CSREMS, presented seven recommendations in the committee's final report.

- 1) Sociology departments should explicitly recognize that as their programs diversify in ways that reverse historical patterns of enrolling predominantly White students, there will be tensions among students, faculty, and staff that need to be identified and analyzed to develop support systems that strengthen peer relations, faculty mentoring and academic professionalization.
- 2) ASA should disseminate and discuss the findings of this report at the yearly ASA conferences of the Directors of Graduate Studies and the Department Chairs.
- 3) Through CSREMS and the Minority Affairs Program, ASA should sponsor a panel and series of focus groups with graduate students to discuss the report findings and develop recommendations for the ASA to disseminate to departments to consider integrating into their programs.
- 4) Through CSREMS, ASA should encourage the regional sociological associations to disseminate the report findings through special thematic sessions. Regional associations should also be encouraged to hold focus groups with graduate students to discuss the report

findings and develop recommendations to disseminate to departments to consider integrating into their programs.

- 5) ASA and CSREMS should jointly encourage departments to hold a series of discussions with their graduate students to discuss the report findings and ascertain what might be done within the program to improve peer relations and academic professionalization.
- 6) ASA should support the production of research briefs that further analyze findings of this CSREMS report to include unreported features of department climate, faculty advising, and departmental procedures that may also impact graduate student satisfaction and their preparation for academic careers.
- 7) ASA Council should renewal of the Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in Sociology for another five-year term. We recommend that CSREMS collaborate with the ASA Research Department to examine longitudinal career tracks of early-career faculty to identify differences by race-ethnicity and gender.

President Wright identified recommendation 7 as the only item requiring immediate action. Discussion of recommendations 1-6 was deferred to the next Council meeting.

MOTION: To continue the Standing Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in Sociology for another five years. Carried.

B. Final Report: Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities in Sociology

Academic and Professional Affairs Program Director Margaret Weigers Vitullo, who serves as the ASA staff liaison to the Disabilities Committee, reported that there were 236 clicks on the option for members to ask for accessibility information when they renew online. Those who responded to this option were in the lower income categories for dues and were less likely to be employed full-time.

Recommendations contained in the extensive committee report were highlighted:

Governance:

Rec #1. Continue to support the Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities in Sociology.

Data Collection:

Rec #2. Continue the data collection efforts on members who want disability services.

Rec #3. Fully institute ASA data collection efforts regarding reports and resolution of accessibility concerns.

Meeting Accessibility:

Rec #4. Provide accessible electronic copies of the Annual Meeting program upon request as a standard accessibility feature.

Rec #5. Establish as standard ASA policy and practice the distribution of a letter regarding disability services to members who check the box requesting information.

Rec #6. As part of standard meeting policy, the hotel should complete an accessibility checklist, preferably before contracting or at least a year before the meeting, to enable the identification of accessibility problems. Based on this checklist, ASA staff can identify potential problems and negotiate for their resolution. Completed checklists should be stored and saved and made available to the committee to the extent appropriate, along with reports on changes made to properties in response to them.

Rec #7. As part of standard meeting policy, the ASA should conduct an on-site inspection following receipt of the checklist.

Accommodations that should be made in standard practice:

Rec #8. Provide an orientation/walk-through upon request as a standard accessibility service.

- Rec. #9. Provide a gender-neutral restroom as a standard accessibility service.
- Rec. #10. Provide captioning for all plenary sessions as standard practice (not simply upon request). CART
- Rec. #11. Insert accessibility concerns onto the program maps.
- Rec. #12. Materials related to the site should more broadly offer relevant accessibility information.
- Rec. #13. A brief mention of disability services and how to file a concern/complaint should be in the annual program, on the website, and emailed to any member who has requested it.
- Rec. #14. As a matter of policy, provide a link to the 2008 *Footnotes* article on universal design and accessible presentation in communications accepting presentations.
- Website accessibility:
- Rec. #15. Provide continued support to ensure website compliance by the 2012 Annual Meeting.

The importance of closed captioning for hard-of-hearing and older attendees was also emphasized. In summary, it was reported that ASA is perceived as not being responsive to accessibility requests when it actually has a long history of being responsive.

Several recommendations were identified as having cost ramifications, about which more information was desired.

MOTION: To accept in principle the recommendations from the Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities in Sociology, except for items 7 and 10 which are deferred to the next Council meeting pending specific information on cost implications. Carried.

C. Update: Committee on the Status of Women in Sociology (CSWS)

Research Director Roberta Spalter-Roth, who serves as ASA staff liaison to CSWS, presented the committee's progress report. Three areas were noted: the status of a survey of number of years in rank; the fact that CSWS's proposal for a panel session on the 2012 Annual Meeting program was turned down; and a recommendation to include a statement in the Annual Meeting program that harassment is unethical in any professional setting.

The Midwest Sociological Society was cited as one association that has printed a statement about professional conduct in its meeting program, and members of CSWS were unanimous in their agreement to recommend that ASA do likewise. Several sample texts were available for Council's consideration.

It was suggested that the Executive Officer, who serves as liaison to the ASA Committee on Professional Ethics (COPE), could consult with that committee and prepare a final statement for Council's review at its next meeting.

MOTION: To approve the Committee on the Status of Women in Sociology's recommendation to include a statement about unethical conduct in the Annual Meeting program, with the final wording of the statement to be provided by the Executive Officer at Council's February 2012 meeting based on input from the Committee on Professional Ethics. Carried.

8. Report of the Executive Officer

A. ASA Post-Doctoral Fellowship Program and Research

In conjunction with the Annual Meeting, ASA hosted a gathering of ASA post-doctoral recipients, mentors, department representatives, and National Science Foundation (NSF) program officers. NSF funds this program and, at this juncture, its program officers appear pleased with the program. Preparations are underway to launch the competitive process to select the second and final cohort of post-doctoral fellows under this grant.

Some misgivings were expressed about encouraging the development of postdoctoral fellowships as a solution to current job market pressures. Postdoctoral fellowships make sense in the natural and biological sciences, but those fellowships tend to be for 4-5 years. At NSF's behest, the ASA Research Department is evaluating the ASA Postdoctoral Fellowship Program. When more information is available, it will be more productive to look at the role of postdoctoral fellowships in sociology.

In the meantime, it was reported that most of the NSF program postdoctoral recipients in sociology have indicated that their most valuable activity to date was publishing articles or books based on their dissertations. Whether this is the most valuable activity for these sociologists' careers over the longer term is unknown, and it is also unclear whether it is the most valuable activity for a program aimed at producing research on the "Great Recession."

B. Department Resources Group (DRG) Program Review

In August of 2010, Council members asked for a review of ASA's Department Resources Group (DRG), with a focus on its mission and the extent to which the DRG is fulfilling that mission. The DRG Advisory Board, with the help of a graduate student (Anthony R. Williams, Miami University) and a long-term DRG member (Joan Spade, SUNY-Brockport), conducted research and analysis leading to a series of reports on DRG activities.

The extensive review presented to Council included a brief history of the DRG, an overview of current activities, a look at how the ASA DRG compares to similar programs of other professional societies, and a consideration of future directions for the DRG. It was noted that most of the requests for DRG services come from four-year degree institutions. The report concluded that the Department Resources Group is an important dimension of the work of the Association.

Council expressed its thanks to DRG members and everyone involved in the excellent program review.

C. Public Affairs and Public Information

Before proceeding with the public affairs update, Council reflected on ASA does or should do in the area of lobbying while still remaining a 401(c)(3). It was noted that ASA is a member of COSSA, which lobbies on behalf of the social sciences, and ASA can do a certain very limited amount of lobbying while remaining within the laws and regulations would have to declare itself as an organization. ASA is very careful to adhere to these limitations. To do more lobbying, as contrasted with educational activities involving federal policy makers, and still remain a 401(c)(3), ASA would have to declare itself a *registered* 401(c)(3) and report the specific times, dollars, and activities involved in lobbying.

It was noted that the Population Association of America (PAA) has done this and has a registered lobbyist in DC. A Council member who also holds membership in PAA recommended that ASA seriously consider the idea, noting that many Congressional staff members expect the annual PAA visit. Both supporters and non-supporters of PAA concerns are visited, and valuable connections are gained as a result. PAA also puts out calls to its members to ask their Congressional representatives to support specific actions. ASA staff will pursue more information about this option and provide it to Council at a future meeting. Council is very aware that members potentially would be divided on whether ASA should make such a change.

Public Affairs and Public Information (PAPI) Director Brad Smith then reported that his program handles three main functions: promoting sociological research, promoting ASA research and other programs, and working with outside stakeholders to make sure that social science voices are heard in the federal policy community. PAPI staff is active in several coalitions of which ASA is a member that operate in the federal arena (e.g., COPAFS, COSSA, NHA, Research!America and others) to keep ASA abreast issues on Capitol Hill and in the federal research agencies and collaborate with other science organizations as needed to increase effectiveness on behalf of the social sciences..

Smith pointed out that when ASA advocates with coalition partners, the focus of that effort cannot be solely on sociology. It must represent the broader social science front. If ASA decides to register as a lobbying organization, it could then add more targeted efforts on behalf of issues specific to sociology and sociologists. The current tough budget climate is requiring federal agencies to plan immediately for a 5% cut, with a secondary plan for a 10% cut in 2013. Unless this direction is altered, the Census Bureau, for example, will have to lay off 700 employees with potentially major impacts not only on the 2020 Census but on the preparation and distribution of research databases and reports.

On the public information side, media coverage of the 2011 Annual Meeting met with success. There were articles on the front pages of CNN and MSNBC, and more coverage is in progress. Most press attention was focused on specific presentations at the meeting, rather than the meeting itself. ASA staff used social media accounts (Twitter, Facebook, Flickr) throughout the meeting to identify meeting highlights and share news, as was the newest ASA blog (www.Speak4Sociology.org).

D. Technology Update

In the interest of time, Council members were referred to the informational memo with updates on the status of various IT projects in the Executive Office.

E. External Grants

Research Director Spalter-Roth reported that the National Science Foundation (NSF) grant that supports the Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline was awarded, and ASA also received funding to do a repeat of the BA and Beyond survey. The future of NSF funding is worrisome, however, to the discipline. NSF is the source of 67% of federally funded sociology research.

9. New Business

A. ASA Business Meeting Resolutions

One resolution was submitted and accepted in the 2011 ASA Business meeting and sent to Council. It requested Council to submit a formal ASA response to the announcement in the *Federal Register* of July 26, 2011, concerning possible changes to 45 CFR 46, the Common Rule, which governs IRB review of research proposals.

The Executive Officer informed Council that COSSA and other associations have already scheduled a meeting on August 31 to discuss these issues. Having a small working group of Council involved in preparing a response would be helpful.

MOTION: To approve immediate formation of an ad hoc committee to prepare responses to the proposed directions for change to the HHS Common Rule by the September 26, 2011, deadline. Carried.

Council members supplied suggestions for possible committee members covering the full range of methodological expertise and a Council liaison.

B. Date for Winter 2012 Council Meeting

Dates of February 10-12 or 17-19 were proposed for the 2012 winter meeting. Noting that the SWS winter meeting is over the first weekend in February, and the ESS meeting is around the last weekend of February, the Secretary expressed a preference for Council to meet on February 10-12. The expectation is that the FAD committee would meet on Friday afternoon, and Council would meet all day Saturday and a half-day on Sunday.

Meeting dates of February 10-12, 2012, were confirmed, pending a check for conflicts with absent Council members.

C. Proposal for a Task Force on Reducing Manuscript Review Times in Sociology Journals

At-Large Council Member Monica Prasad presented a proposal to address concerns raised by some sociologists that the length of time it takes sociology journals to review and make decisions about submitted manuscripts is too long. The basic goal would be to encourage sociology journals to make public how long it takes from submission to acceptance and then to appearance in print. Another goal would be to provide information that could assist journal editors shorten these times if necessary. Whether review times are changed or not, journals should be transparent about the average length of time involved in the review process. Slow response times lengthen progress toward the PhD and the ability of junior faculty to compile tenure-worthy records.

Prasad proposed that ASA undertake three steps to reduce editorial lag time across the discipline: (1) collect and disseminate data on turnaround times for non-ASA sociology journals, as well as the data already collected on times for ASA journals; (2) sponsor an annual seminar for editors on "best practices"; and (3) set up a task force to consider other steps to reduce response times across the disciplinary journals.

While comments from Council members who were also past editors confirmed there are variations in how long the review of a manuscript takes, there was not a uniform view among Council members that there were major problems to be addressed. Data collected on ASA journals over many years indicate reasonable timeframes are typical, and the ASA Publications Committee watches the data provided by the online manuscript tracking system and works with editors to resolve problems that emerge. It was pointed out that ASA publishes this ASA journal data annually in *Footnotes* and also publishes a guide for sociologists seeking sociological publishing options that includes self-reported information about production and review lags for non-ASA journals (see [Publishing Options: An Author's Guide to Journals](#) in the ASA bookstore and on iTunes).

Some Council members suggested that changes in editorial office and internet technology have improved turnaround times in the editorial review processes. Yet Council recognized that many authors perceive there is a problem, even when editors and/or publishers do not. While not all Council members felt review times were decreasing, all agreed that they are probably not decreasing across the entire spectrum of sociological journals.

A question was raised about getting input from the Publications Committee. The Secretary reported that the committee had discussed the same proposal now being presented to Council and had not supported it. The committee had concerns about ASA involving itself in the editorial processes of non-ASA journals, and there was also concern that the proposal might add to ASA editors' already heavy workloads.

There were questions among Council members about what the Association could do to accurately identify whether a problem exists, and, if so, what its parameters were and what role ASA could legitimately play in solving it. The proposal that ASA conduct a survey of ASA members who had submitted manuscripts to journals to measure the extent of the problem was discussed at length. Significant concerns were raised by Council members about instrumentation, memory recall, sampling and related methodological issues that led to serious doubt about whether a member survey would provide more and accurate information on whether there was a problem.

An alternative suggestion was for ASA to reinstate the annual meeting of ASA managing editors and invite managing editors of non-ASA journals to attend to discuss collectively problems with and strategies for improving manuscript processing times, including encouraging more prompt return of high quality reviews from reviewers. Also suggested was whether the ASA Program Committee could invite a panel of former editors to talk about how to manage review times.

Council members noted that the frequency and timeframes of revise and resubmit (R&R) policies differ across journals as does their perspectives on how many and how detailed the reviews should be that are provided. This produces differences in review times that are a function of the traditions and cultures of journals as well as their owners and publishers.

There was increasing skepticism among Council members that surveys of either those who submit to journals or journal editors would get more complete or more reliable data than already exists. There was also skepticism that ASA had the ability or the mandate to address issues regarding non-ASA journals.

MOTION: To approve the proposal for a survey about manuscript review times. Defeated (1 yes, 11 no).

The Secretary indicated that an outreach to managing editors of ASA and non-ASA journals was deemed potentially useful by the Publications Committee and ASA Publications staff. If there is some success using this avenue, then it could be a first step toward addressing structural issues that impact the lives of graduate students and assistant professors. To review these and other actions ASA might take, it was suggested that an *ad hoc* committee of Council be appointed to report back to the full Council at its Winter 2012 meeting. Council member Prasad agreed to chair such a committee. It was also suggested that instead of having a current ASA editor participate on behalf of the Publications Committee, a previous ASA editor could be recruited to provide significant input.

MOTION: To appoint an ad hoc committee of Council, to work in consultation with the Publications Committee, to look into issues connected to manuscript review turnaround times in sociology journals. Carried (9 yes, 1 no).

Having no other business, President Wright adjourned the first meeting of the 2011-2012 ASA Council at 4:32 p.m. on Saturday, August 24, 2011.