

2006 Annual Report of the Association Operations Committee

Deborah Nichols chaired the AOC for 2006 but she was unable to attend the spring meeting, which was chaired by Setha Lowe. This report has been prepared by Lowe and Nichols.

2006 Activities

Nominations

The test of the hybrid model electronic spring ballot was discussed. The hybrid model was a ballot sent via e-mail to members who then downloaded the ballot and mailed in their vote. This hybrid model was seen as confusing to some and did not increase participation. The committee agreed unanimously that AAA should go to a completely electronic election. This action is required to be approved by the full membership so the committee approved going with a full paper election if the electronic voting referendum did not pass.

New AAA Dues Structure

The committee discussed the new income based dues structure. The committee approved the recommendation of the new dues structure with lower student dues rates and if needed a higher top level rate. The committee also approved recommending that the new dues structure be implemented effective January 2007.

Five-Year Committee Reviews

The AOC reviewed and discussed five-year reports of the following committees:

1. Committee on Minority Issues - After extensive discussion, it was decided that Alan Goodman as president would report back to the committee suggesting that they work with Alan to create a "working group" to incorporate the goals of inclusivity. It was suggested by Setha Low that social justice and inclusivity be added to their committee charge. Tom Leatherman added that the words "and retention" should be added after the word "recruitment" in their charge. It was passed unanimously. It was also recommended that AOC support \$500 going to the committee for a luncheon or reception for minority students. The AOC decided that we should not fund more travel funds specific to this committee, and that the committee should work on a more detailed marketing plan in order to produce more money for these activities.

2. Ethics Committee - The most important discussion was what the ethics committee should be working on in the coming three years. The committee report suggested that it focus on the ethics educational project, however, the committee thought that this term was somewhat vague. The AOC recommended that a letter be sent that asked the committee to continue with ethics education, but that we could not commit more funds, and that the committee does have a session at the annual meeting to communicate their concerns and relevant issue. It was suggested that they also use AN to promote discussion of ethics issues and work to promote an AAA-wide ethics debate.

3. Human Rights Committee - The AOC applauded the idea of a human rights prize, and suggested that they look for outside funding for this prize. The idea of a human rights fund and endowment should be taken to the finance committee and must follow AAA endowment rules. The AOC also liked the idea of a reparations task force and encourage them to move forward with the idea.

4. Committee on Public Policy - The AOC suggested that since there was not adequate support for a Policy Institute that the Committee rethink its charge. The Committee has had a difficult time defining its objectives and has changed direction and chairs many times. If there is not a compelling initiative that should be taken up by this committee, the AOC will have to consider disbanding it. We want to encourage them to work with the IB and EB and act as an advisory body for current public policy issues, but is this what the committee wants to do?

5. National Security Committee - AOC reviewed the proposed charge and approved it.

The AOC revised the questions posed to committees for their five-year committee reviews.

Reports for five-year reviews have been requested for the Annual Meeting Executive Program Committee, Annual Meeting Program Committee, Awards Committee, and the Committee on Scientific Communication. These will be discussed by the AOC at its spring 2007 meeting.

Student Assembly Discussion

The committee discussed the long-term need for a formally recognized Student Assembly. The committee approved the recommendation to create a permanent Student Assembly with the structure to be worked out by the Executive Board.

Audit Committee Charter

The committee approved the charter for the newly created Audit committee.

Executive Board Job Descriptions

Descriptions of Executive Board positions were developed in conjunction with the creation of job descriptions for the professional staff who consulted job descriptions of similar associations. Following the AOC discussion and some suggested changes, job descriptions for the Executive Board positions were accepted. Having these position descriptions should be helpful in seeking candidates for Executive Board positions. During discussion of the Executive Board job descriptions the AOC learned that there is no job description for the Executive Director's position. The AOC felt there should be such a description, and the AOC Chair will discuss with Alan Goodman how best to proceed with this.

Petition from SASci for Section Status

Susan Weller President of the Society for Scientific Anthropology contacted the Executive Board to indicate their interest in changing from an interest group of a section.

They currently have 563 AAA members. The AOC reviewed the draft of their mission statement. Two major concerns were identified, the name and draft mission statement do not adequately distinguish the proposed section from other sections and the umbrella mission of the AAA to promote anthropological science. Additionally, the proposed section must be legally distinct from SASci; to further that separation the AOC suggested they consider a distinct name. Following the AOC meeting Nichols and Kim Baker met with Weller and others from SASci to express support for their interest in becoming a section and discuss the need to modify the mission statement and maintain legal separation of SASci from the proposed AAA section. Weller subsequently emailed the mission statement for their interest group for comment by the AOC and similar concerns were raised and SASci was asked to refine their proposed section mission statement and name.

Future Items

AOC discussed the need to provide information to committees on how to move forward items for action by the Executive Board.

Another issue that arose during discussions at the Section Assembly concerns possible governance changes to improve representation of sections on the Executive Board and the problem of sections with consistently low memberships.