Pending Correction and Approval at the 2021 Meeting

Minutes of the 2020 Pacific Division Executive Committee Meeting

Zoom
Wednesday, April 8, 2020

Present: Elizabeth Brake, Michael Cholbi, Rebecca Copenhaver, Vrinda Dalmiya, Penelope Maddy, Alexander Sager (chair), and Janet Stemwedel.

Guests: Amy Ferrer, Clair Morrissey, Jenna Donohue, and Mallory Medeiros (taking minutes).

1. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting came to order at 3:06 PM.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: The American Philosophical Association acknowledges and pays respect to the indigenous people upon whose ancestral lands this conference is being held. We recognize that the rights of native and indigenous people and nations have been and continue to be denied and violated, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: The agenda was adopted.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: The minutes were adopted as published on the APA web site.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: None raised.

6. REPORT OF ACTIONS BY EMAIL:

   The Committee added names to the list of philosophers approved for service on the Divisional Program Committee.

   The Committee approved Alex Sager for a two-year term replacing Michael Rosenthal as a Member-at-Large on and Chair of the Executive Committee.

   The Committee, along with the National Board of Officers, approved the cancellation of the 2020 Pacific Division meeting in San Francisco because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
DIVISIONAL BUSINESS

7. SECRETARY-TREASURER’S REPORT (Copenhaver): As Secretary-Treasurer, Copenhaver thanked the Program Chair Elizabeth Brake and her Program Committee for a wonderful program for the 2020 meeting and emphasized that it would have been a fantastic meeting. She also thanked outgoing President Richard Arenson, outgoing Member-at-Large Michael Cholbi, and outgoing Representative to the Board Janet Stemwedel for their service, and Alex Sager for replacing Cholbi as a Member-at-Large and Chair of the Executive Committee.

Meeting Registrations: Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we had excellent pick-up in meeting registration and hotel reservations for the 2020 meeting. We suffered no decrease in pick-up prior to the meeting’s cancellation. Our long robust past of pick-up in meeting registrations and hotel reservations are less likely to be reliable guides in the future, especially for 2021. For example, it is not clear how we might have to adjust future hotel room blocks to anticipate long-term changes in post-pandemic behavior. We already have hotel contracts through 2023, so all we can do in terms of hotels is revisit those contracts to ensure greater security. Looking long-term, we cannot inductively rely on our past excellent showings as evidence as much as we used to do so.

Our pre-pandemic financial situation was good. The Pacific Division’s finances consist of a savings account; a low-yield secure savings instrument of 39 months; and a Marriott Rewards account that is unfortunately not as good as it used to be because of Marriott’s merger with Western. A couple of weeks ago, a 19-month savings instrument timed out and Copenhaver closed it; those funds are currently in cash reserves and will be transferred to the National Office.

Copenhaver’s goals for herself were to finish the Secretary-Treasurer guidebook and to search for a new assistant to replace and be trained by Jenna Donohue. She has not yet finished the guidebook, which is good because there may be new practices going forward post-pandemic. The new assistant search was an open search conducted anonymously until letters of recommendation were read during the last round. The National Office was tremendously helpful with this search; they issued the call for applications; received applications; and anonymized all applications.

In regards to the pandemic and its effect on the 2020 meeting, we have not yet settled how the 2020 sessions will be handled because we have a good faith verbal agreement with the St. Francis about the possibility of a scheduled Fall 2020 meeting. Copenhaver and Ferrer tried very hard to get a cancellation that would not require us to pay full penalties and part of what was discussed is that we would be open to a rescheduled Fall 2020 meeting. The understanding was that we would come back and have conversations with the St. Francis about that. We want to maintain our positive relationship with the St. Francis but also acknowledge the difficulties of their situation as a member of the hotel industry.

Ferrer created a working group consisting of the Secretary-Treasurers, Presidents, and Program Chairs for 2021 for all three divisions, as well as a few other APA staff members. All three divisions are working together on contingency plans, but each division will make
its own final decisions. The working group is focused on two scenarios: (1) the potential of not holding an in-person meeting for any or all divisions in 2021 and (2) the possibility of holding a significantly curtailed in-person meeting. In order to have as much lead-time as possible, the working group’s first meeting is in a few days. The working group will consider how to address the 2020 divisional program sessions. How we will successfully deal with these sessions requires the generosity of the Central and Eastern Divisions. Although each division is independent, we all work productively together, which provides stability. Working together is the best way to ensure maximum communication and the working group will help achieve that.

There is the possibility of as many of 2020 Pacific divisional program sessions as possible being distributed amongst the three 2021 meetings. This is because the 2021 Pacific Division meeting is in Portland, which cannot accommodate a conference that is twice as large as the 2021 meeting. Thus, to hold these sessions at a 2021 meeting, we would have to hold them across all three 2021 meetings. The Central and Eastern Division Secretary-Treasurers have been very helpful and said that they will give us whatever they can. Space is always limited so we will not be offering rescheduling at 2021 meetings for 2020 Pacific affiliated group sessions. We may not be able to accommodate all 2020 Pacific refereed and invited sessions at the 2021 meetings, so we will need to devise a fair procedure to determine which will be held. Based on current news reports, Copenhaver thinks that a rescheduled 2020 Pacific meeting is unlikely, so the Secretary-Treasurers are focusing their energy on contingency plans for the 2021 meetings.

Copenhaver expressed deep gratitude to Jenna Donohue for her exceptional service and professionalism over the past four years. Much of the work that the Pacific Division does would not be possible without Jenna.

8. REVIEW OF PROPOSED BUDGET (Copenhaver and Ferrer):

This is a proposed budget intended for discussion, rather than for approval or disapproval. We do this budget planning each year run through the National Office and the numbers we have are estimates based on past experience.

The current proposed budget is less likely to be accurate than in the past because, for example, it does not take into account the Pacific Division’s financial hit from the 2020 meeting. What this means for the Pacific Division and the National Office is that there is no meeting registration revenue from what would have been the 2020 Pacific Division meeting. There were also costs related to creating that program. The Pacific Division budgets to have costs equal to meeting registration, and any additional revenue goes to the National Office, specifically earmarked to diversity.

Some matters of concern are that we did not take in any revenue this year and we do not know what revenues will look like in the coming years. The bottom line is that we will have to undertake some significant cost-saving measures. The Committee does not have to discuss right now what these measures will be. An example of a small, symbolically important cost-saving measure is forgoing taking the Pacific Division President out to dinner to celebrate their presidency. The only significantly cost-saving measures available to
us are either uncomfortable or painful. The uncomfortable one is asking everyone to forgo A/V for the next few meetings because the Pacific Division pays $140.00 per session for A/V. The painful one is graduate student stipends, which is the only place where we can do very, very significant cost-cutting. Ferrer agreed that these are the clearest options.

Ferrer noted that what is going on with the Pacific Division’s budget carries across to the National Office and they lost revenue associated with the Pacific Division. They were able to hold onto a little bit of sponsorship revenue as credit towards a future meeting. People who become APA members later in the fiscal year do so because of meetings and cancelling the 2020 Pacific meeting has affected this. The APA is a tight situation and it is exploring options for governmental assistance that are being offered through the Small Business Administration. This is difficult though because: (1) the system is overwhelmed and (2) the APA is hosted by the University of Delaware, which affects what grants that the APA is eligible for.

The APA will be digging deeply into their reserves. They are hopeful that if they are able to have 2021 meetings are close to their pre-pandemic anticipated sizes, then between their reserves and these meetings, the Pacific Division will not have to make some of the painful cuts that Copenhaver mentioned and the APA can then begin to build its reserves back up.

If, however, this crisis extends to the 2021 divisional meetings, the whole organization—not just the Pacific Division—will have to make some very deep and painful cuts in terms of staffing and programs. The situation is pretty serious and we are likely to have to make some tough choices in the coming year or so. The APA is not alone in this; other scholarly societies are facing difficulties. The APA is trying to budget as conservatively as it reasonably can, given the uncertainty right now. It is, however, very hard to make any real educated guesses right now about what is going to be happening in a few weeks, much less in a few months or a year. The proposed budget is the best that we can guess right now and we may need to do another budget in the future.

Cholbi asked about what our insurance policy offers in terms of cancellation for future meetings. Ferrer responded, first explaining that event cancellation insurance is purchased in blocks for multiple meetings at once. The last purchase was two years ago and included all meetings that were scheduled at that time, which included the 2020 Pacific Division meeting. This policy helped, for example, with the 2018 Eastern Division meeting in Savannah. At the time of that last policy purchase, communicable disease coverage was a 20% increase in premium, so together Ferrer and the Secretary-Treasurers elected not to get it. This decision affected the 2020 Pacific Division meeting and will affect the 2021 Eastern Division meeting and 2021 Central Division meeting, and it means that we are unlikely to see any claims approved from that policy. On our broker’s advice, Ferrer reported the cancellation of the 2020 Pacific Division meeting to the insurance provider and will send them final numbers. It is unlikely that we will receive anything from the insurance provider, but we are going to try everything.

When the pandemic hit, we were in the process of getting cancellation insurance quotes for meetings that we contracted in the past year. We were told that cancellation insurance was not going to be provided for meetings more than two years out. This past week, our broker
told Ferrer that event cancellation insurance is not being offered for events more than one year out. They also said that all of providers available to us are specifically excluding all communicable diseases from their policies—and even if they were not doing this, COVID-19 would be a pre-existing condition at this point. Unfortunately, insurance is not likely to provide us with any relief for meetings over the next few years. If a policy that would provide us this relief becomes available, we will revisit this. Ferrer expects that the 20% increase in premium for communicable disease coverage will rise in the future.

9. REPORT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD (Stemwedel):

Stemwedel reported that the Board continues to work to serve well all of its members, as well as a broader constituency of philosophers. The Board expanded APA voting privileges to graduate student members. It also considered a proposal from the Graduate Student Council on LGBTQ+ safety at APA meetings and a proposal from Philosophers for Sustainability. There was a discussion about a possible joint meeting with the North American Philosophical Association, which seems unlikely to happen soon because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Productive strategic planning took place at the November meeting in Washington, D.C. The Board elected an APA Board Chair: Dom Lopes.

Copenhaver thanked Stemwedel her service to the Pacific Division and the Board.

10. REPORT OF THE CEO OF THE APA (Ferrer): Ferrer noted that most of her report is pre-COVID era.

Public Statements: Since the 2019 Pacific Division meeting, the Board has issued or joined a number of public statements on matters relevant to the APA’s work. These included:

- making a joint-statement and an independent philosophy-specific statement opposing proposed humanities program cuts at the University of Tulsa;
- in May 2019, issuing a letter in conjunction with the American Sociological Association to protest the defunding of philosophy and sociology programs at public universities in Brazil;
- in September 2019, joining a letter expressing concern about the Department of Education’s interpretation of Title VI as it related to the Duke/UNC Consortium on Middle East Studies;
- in November 2019, after an informal poll of members, issuing a public comment opposing the U.S. National Labor Relations Board’s proposed rule that would rescind graduate students’ federally backed right to unionize;
- in January 2020, joining a letter calling for the preservation of cultural heritage sites in Iran and stating that military targeting of such sites is a war crime;
- in the last few weeks, joining a statement regarding the use of student evaluations in the context of the COVID-19 crisis; and
- in the last week, joining a statement regarding academic labor in the context of the COVID-19 crisis.

Every one of those letters was organized within the context of the American Council of Learned Societies and in particular, their Conference of Executive Officers, which is a group of executive directors and other lead administrators of ACLS member societies.
**Strategic Planning:** As Stemwedel mentioned, strategic planning has been a major priority over the last year. The Board initiated a strategic planning process and appointed an advisory committee for that process. It ran a survey last summer on the priorities and concerns of members and constituents. In Fall 2019, it held five virtual focus groups via Zoom: three general-focus; one focused on adjuncts; and one focused on philosophers at two-year colleges. A conversation at the Board Meeting was part of the strategic planning process and a number of strategic planning conversations were planned in the context of the divisional meetings. Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, Ferrer was in the process of reviewing APA records on membership and meeting data for input into the strategic planning process. Ferrer still hopes to present a strategic plan to the Board at the November 2020 meeting, but it is not clear how feasible that will be or what such a plan would look like. The strategic planning process will continue and it will be informed by the new reality that we are all facing.

**Grants Received and Awarded:**
- We completed the second of four years in the second term of a Mellon grant that we have had for several years to support diversity institutes. Calendar year 2020 is the last year that grant will be in full force. Calendar year 2021 is supposed to be a “phase out” year and was originally planned to fund diversity institutes and some of the activities at a lower level. But since some of the institutes are being reframed in the context of the current crisis, there may be more funds available and we may end up doing a full final year instead. This will depend on how things turn out this summer.
- The Board awarded $25,000 in small grants; $20,000 in diversity grants; and a number of micro-grants (grants up to $1,000 with a turnaround time of about two weeks that come from some dedicated donor funds, e.g., our teaching fund).
- Through the Travel Assistance Fund for Philosophers of Color and the Diversity Institute Alumni Fund (the latter is part of the Mellon grant), the Board awarded several thousand dollars in travel grants.

**Other Items of Note:** In the past year, the Board also:
- approved a policy on revoking prizes and awards;
- approved funding for a survey on disability and accessibility, organized by a disability task force that it put together;
- approved a proposal from the Graduate Student Council on LGBTQ+ safety at APA meetings, which will inform the selection of future meeting sites;
- formed an ad-hoc committee on voting privileges, whose recommendations in favor of graduate students having voting rights and creating a seat on the Board for the Chair of the Graduate Student Council were adopted (the new seat is a bylaws amendment and will be voted on by the membership in the upcoming elections);
- revised our statement on external departmental reviews to allow members to self-identify in their APA member profile as being will to serve as external reviewers;
- approved data task force’s report on the state of the profession, which reviewed the Philosophy Documentation Center’s directory from 1967–2017 (Ferrer is working with the task force on how to present the large amount of data in an accessible and easy-to-understand executive summary); and
• signed contracts for several new meetings, so that we have them for going out to 2023 for all divisions.

There have not been any changes to the APA staff for the past year; we are in a very stable place and they are great at what they do.

Ferrer serves in representation of the APA on related humanities boards (American Council of Learned Societies and its Conference of Executive Officers; Delaware Humanities; and the National Humanities Alliance) to help make sure that philosophers and the APA have a voice within those groups.

Prizes, Elections, and Appointments: Geoff Sayre-McCord was selected as the Quinn Prize Winner for Service. As Stemwedel mentioned, the Board elected Dom Lopes as the next Board Chair. The Board approved structures for the appointment of Board representatives to the APA Journal Governing Committee and appointed new representatives who will begin serving on July 1, 2020: Lori Watson and Jamie Dreier.

11. PROPOSAL: BYLAWS AMENDMENT (Copenhaver):

**Background:** Elections for the Eastern and Central Divisions are held on the APA website shortly after the end of the Pacific Division meeting each year. Pacific Division elections are held at the Pacific Division business meeting unless there are contested races, in which case those elections are also held on the APA website shortly after the end of the Pacific Division meeting. The following bylaws changes bring our bylaws into accordance with Robert’s Rules and with current practice.

The proposed amendment would change the first sentence of 3(d) to: “All contested elections to office shall be by ballot to all members of the Association who are certified by the executive director as affiliated with the Pacific division, within 30 days after the end of the annual meeting by the secretary-treasurer.”

The proposed amendment would also create 3(e): “Uncontested elections need not be conducted by ballot. For any office having no more than one nominee, the presiding officer at the annual business meeting shall declare the nominee elected by acclamation.”

The bylaws amendment was unanimously approved. It will be added to the Annual Business Meeting agenda for approval.

12. SUGGESTED SESSIONS (Copenhaver):

**Current Process:** While there is no formal procedure for submitting proposals for invited sessions, the Program Committee welcomes such suggestions. They should be emailed to the Program Chair at chair@apa-pacific.org. Suggestions may be as simple as a brief topic statement or more detailed and contain specific suggestions for speakers and commentators. The Program Committee takes suggestions as suggestions and there is no formal vetting procedure. Those who make suggestions should understand that not all suggestions will be followed up and that the Committee may decide to develop a suggestion
in substantially altered form. In all cases, the Committee, not the person making the suggestion, will handle program organization.

The types of invited sessions are: (1) Invited Symposia, which have at least two speakers and normally some commentators; (2) Invited Papers, which are two hours with one speaker and two commentators; and (3) Book Symposia, which have two or more speakers, in addition to the author(s) responding.

Suggestions are more likely to be followed up if made by July 1. The invited program is set by September 1.

A member has requested that the Program Committee be required to accept and populate all suggested sessions. This suggestion was discussed amongst the Executive Committee and rejected on the grounds that it would be neither feasible nor advisable.

13. REGISTRATION RATES (Copenhaver):

We did not raise registration rates for the 2020 meeting. Rates were last raised in 2017.

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<th>2017: $30/$80</th>
<th>2018—2020: $35/$85</th>
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<td>Student Members</td>
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<td>APA Members</td>
<td>$110/$160</td>
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The Executive Committee discussed reasons for and against raising registration rates. A reason in favor of raising them is the stress that the COVID-19 pandemic/cancellation of the 2020 meeting caused to the Pacific Division’s financial situation. Reasons against raising them are: people are already feeling financial strain; institutions will likely have to cut back on travel funds for participants; and we may want to be cautious in raising rates in a year following a cancellation.

14. MEETING SITES & DATES (Copenhaver): The 2021 meeting will be in Portland; 2022 will be in Vancouver; and 2023 will be in San Francisco. We will continue to solicit proposals from any hotels in the relevant area for reservations at any time of year in hopes of a financially feasible date that does not conflict with Passover or Easter.

15. APPOINTMENT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE (XC Committee): The committee approved a slate of candidates for the nominating committee and was encouraged to send Copenhaver more names by email.

ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM BUSINESS

16. REPORT OF THE PROGRAM CHAIR (Brake): Brake provided a report to the Executive Committee and summarized it for the Committee.

Statistics: The number of sessions, number of submissions, acceptance rates, etc. were generally in line with our 15-year average.
Problems: Some Program Committee members did not do what they need to do, but many others stepped up and took on extra work. There are two ongoing problems: (1) difficulty of recruiting chairs and (2) difficulty of retaining chairs. Many people asked if the rule prohibiting participants from appearing on the divisional program twice could be altered to help retain chairs. Brake suggested relaxing the rule so that Program Committee members could chair twice. Another issue is that the volunteer list is outdated, which makes things difficult for Program Committee members and creates a time delay. Brake suggested emailing the current volunteer list and asking those on it to opt-in if they would like to volunteer for this year.

Bright Spots: First, based on last year’s Report of the Program Chair, Brake noticed Aqua did not have many technical glitches this year. Those that it did have were often user-errors. Second, Brake did not experience difficulty identifying the correct sub-field for papers (this was also a difficulty last year). It would, however, be helpful to have more refined keywords to differentiate different topics within philosophy of mind. Third, overall the Program Committee was great and did an excellent job.

The Executive Committee discussed whether we are able to have 2020 sessions outside the APA’s typical framework. We cannot do this for two reasons: (1) we have a good faith agreement with the St. Francis to hold a rescheduled meeting there and unless/until they release us from it, doing anything else would undermine it; and (2) the Pacific Division and the National Office lack the resources to hold a virtual meeting. The Executive Committee emphasized that 2020 Pacific Division meeting speakers should mark the acceptance of their paper on their CV. Should their session be rescheduled, they should include that paper on their CV twice.

Brake’s suggestion of allowing Program Committee members to chair twice will be considered. In regards to the volunteer list, an email like what Brake suggested is sent out every year, so Copenhaver and Donohue will speak to Dom Lopes to find out if there is a disconnect in Aqua that can be fixed. As per Brake’s suggestion, Copenhaver will add a sub-field to philosophy of mind; it will likely be philosophy of psychology.

17. APPOINTMENTS TO THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE (XC Committee):
   Copenhaver assembled names for the Program Committee. She also thanked the Program Committee members for their service.

18. PROGRAM CHAIR APPOINTMENTS (XC Committee): Brake recommended a list of names for possible future Chair of the Program Committee. Clair Morrissey was approved as the Program Chair for 2021.

19. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA OF THE ABM (XC Committee): The Annual Business Meeting agenda and the addition of the bylaws amendment to it as Item #7 were unanimously approved.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Sager): None.

21. ADJOURNMENT (Sager): The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 PM.
1. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting came to order at 12:00 PM.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: The American Philosophical Association acknowledges and pays respect to the indigenous people upon whose ancestral lands this conference is being held. We recognize that the rights of native and indigenous people and nations have been and continue to be denied and violated, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: The agenda was adopted.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: The minutes were adopted as published on the APA web site.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: No matters arising from the minutes.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS (Copenhaver): The names of APA members who had passed away since the last meeting were read and a moment of silence was observed.

7. BYLAWS AMENDMENT (Copenhaver): Additional wording regarding elections was added to the Amendment (see Bylaws Amendment). There were no objections, so the Bylaws Amendment was adopted.

8. REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE (Copenhaver): Richard Arneson (chair), Janet Levin, Ryan Preston-Roedder, and Rebecca Copenhaver (ex officio) served as the 2019–20 Nominating Committee. The Committee nominates the following for terms beginning July 1, 2020: Seana Shiffrin for Vice President; Michael Burroughs for Representative to the Board; and Anand Vaidya for Member-at-Large.

   The nominating committee was unanimously approved.

9. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER (Copenhaver): The Secretary-Treasurer summarized her remarks from the meeting of the Executive Committee. (See Executive Committee minutes.)

10. REPORT OF THE PACIFIC DIVISION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (Sager): The Chair of the Executive Committee summarized the actions of the Committee. (See Executive Committee minutes.)

11. REPORT OF THE APA BOARD OF OFFICERS (Ferrer, Stemwedel): Stemwedel summarized her report to the Executive Committee. (See Executive Committee minutes.)
Ferrer summarized her report to the Executive Committee. (See Executive Committee minutes.) Ferrer thanked Stemwedel for her service.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: Copenhaver thanked Arenson, Cholbi, and Stemwedel for their service to the Pacific Division. Copenhaver thanked Donohue for four years of service to the Pacific Division.

13. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 12:14 PM.