

# **Annual Report to APA Board of Offers from the APA Committee on Inclusiveness July 1 2010 through September 2011**

Participating Committee Members July 2010-June 2011:

Anita Silvers, Chair

Teresa Burke (disability representative)

Abigail Gosselin

Omar Mirza

Hye-Ryoung Kang

Shannon Sullivan

Gary Mar/David Kim (Committee on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies)

Thomas Norton-Smith/Brian Burkhart (Committee on the Status of Indigenous Philosophers)

Patrick Goodin (Committee on Blacks in Philosophy)

Eduardo Mendieta/Mitch Avila (Committee on Hispanics)

Talia Bettcher (Committee on the Status of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People in the Profession)

Peggy DesAutels (Committee on the Status of Women)

Laurie Shrage/Cheshire Calhoun, *ex officio* (Ombudsperson for Nondiscrimination)

(slashes show transition of ex officio positions from 2010-11 to 2011-12)

The Inclusiveness Committee completed a great deal of work this year. Especially gratifying was the full and vigorous participation of all members.

## **Work of the Committee:**

### **1. APA Grants**

Committee members reviewed and rated three proposals -

#### **Mentoring Workshop for Women Assistant Professors at Research-Heavy Universities.**

The Committee recommended funding conditional upon inclusion of assistant professors from a more inclusive (less elitist) range of institutions.

#### **Study of the Gender Gap by the Society for Philosophy and Psychology Graduate Student Participation in startup of *philoSOPHIA: A Journal of Continental Feminism***

All these proposals ultimately were funded. Committee members drew attention to the absence of proposals addressing all but one of the groups that are under-represented in the profession. (In 2011, the Committee reviewed proposals addressing two such groups.)

### **2. PIKSI**

Reviewed and made recommendations about funding for a three-year renewal of the Philosophy in an Inclusive Key Summer Institute for Undergraduates from Underrepresented Groups

### **3. Pacific Division Session**

Conducted a session on “Under-Represented Groups in Philosophy: An International Conversation”. The panel included the Inclusiveness Committee member with expertise on disability and a member of the APA Committee on Blacks in Philosophy, both of whom had represented the Inclusiveness Committee at the Cardiff Conference on Underrepresented Groups in Philosophy, sponsored by SWIP-UK and the BPA. Two Canadian CPA members also were on the panel. Inquiries to Mexican philosophers about joining this panel were not successful.

#### **4. Strong Enforcement of APA Nondiscrimination Policy**

Unanimously endorsed the LGBT Committee’s call for strong enforcement of the APA Nondiscrimination Policy, which urges the APA Board to bar institutions that discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation/same-sex conduct. This matter will be on the agenda of the 2011 Board meeting.

#### **5. APA Ombudsperson**

Constructed a list of nominees for appointment as APA Ombudsperson. Cheshire Calhoun, the immediate past chair of the Committee, was appointed.

#### **6. Increasing Representation of People with Disabilities in Philosophy**

The Inclusiveness Committee endorsed dissemination of a request to APA members to make books they have authored or edited available to BOOKSHARE, a nonprofit supported by the U.S. Dept. of Education that digitizes books for visually impaired and other print impaired readers. This project resulted in a marked improvement in the access of such individuals to philosophy books for coursework and for research and thereby in their access to participation in the profession.

#### **Work of the Chair:**

1. Guided and facilitated submission of PIKSI proposal for three-year renewal of funding
2. Worked with Ombudsperson to secure proper referral of cases to APA committees
3. Worked with the Chair of the Committee on the Status of Women in regard to initiating a project such as the one the American Physical Society has employed to facilitate women’s career paths: their committee on women in the profession has identified properties of departments that are successful in facilitating women's careers as physicist (from undergrad education through membership on the faculty). A group of senior women provides consultations, and physics departments invite members of this group to constitute external review committees, do department visits, and assess the department's success and needs to improve in regard to facilitating women to enter and stay in the profession.
4. Served on an Ad Hoc Committee to revise guidelines for APA grants.
5. Took several opportunities to urge implementation of the current nondiscrimination policy, including such matters as bringing the version of the statement up to date in various APA publications and internet sites and organizing a procedure for responding to complaints.
6. Supported a request from the Inclusiveness Committee member with expertise about disability to alter the language on the web about accessibility of APA funded projects from “hearing impaired” to “deaf and hard of hearing”. Most of the proposals ignore the requirement to address accessibility for deaf and hard or hearing persons.

7. Worked with the organizers of the Cardiff Conference to include to representatives of the APA Inclusiveness Committee.
8. Worked throughout the year with APA members and APA staff on various aspects of implementation of data collection.
9. Wrote to President of Howard University regarding the impact on diversity in the profession of the proposal to close philosophy programs at Howard. Circulated information to and urged letter-writing by members of various lists of philosophers committed to diversity.
10. Disseminated job announcements from various departments that sought to reach out to diverse applicants.
11. Worked with the Executive Director to wind down Diversity Essay Project.
12. Received and reviewed communications from the AACCS&U but did not find any relevant to the Committee's charge.
13. Worked with the Inclusiveness Committee member with expertise about disability to launch an important project to develop expert ASL signs for technical philosophy terms. At present interpreters for deaf students taking philosophy courses must finger spell technical terms, which makes classes much harder to follow, or else must invent idiosyncratic signs for them. When completed and the results made available on the APA website, this project will greatly improve deaf people's access to instruction and research in philosophy.

### **Ongoing Issues**

1. Last year, Chair Calhoun reported that "The Syllabi Project continues to be woefully out of date. Two new syllabi were added this year. This is an important resource that is in fact used and the collection of syllabi needs to be updated." To continue this project, the Chairs of the Teaching Philosophy Committee and the Inclusiveness Committee should be authorized to advertise for a member who would like to take on this project (on the model of recruiting editors for a journal).
2. The Inclusiveness Committee did not meet last year – the first year of a new chair's term – because the majority of committee members could not attend any of the three divisional meetings.
3. More sophistication and better coordination about data collection is needed. During the past year, members several times called for data about philosophy students at different levels, broken out by ethnicity and gender, as if the APA could collect data from thousands of institutions in 50 states (as distinct from the UK, which has only about 40 philosophy programs). And of course the federal government collects these data for us in the IPEDs reports. But it is important for the APA to use the same categories to break out data as the federal government does, as every institution uses these to report diversity data.
4. A non-APA member with a history of attacking both disabled and non-disabled individuals on internet discussion lists called for the creation of an APA diversity committee on disability. The individual circulated a form letter on several lists, to be sent to the APA Executive Director. Five APA members wrote to the Executive Director, but one withdrew her letter after learning about the views of the APA members with disabilities who are her longtime acquaintances. The Inclusiveness Committee Chair wrote to the other four, describing the process for developing a proposal to the Board to create a new diversity committee and inviting each to contribute to the process. Only one of the four responded, stating that she is not a person with a disability but

wrote on behalf of her colleagues and students with disabilities. One of the letters was confidential, the other two writers do not self-identify as being persons with a disability. A handful of non-APA members also sent the form letter.

The non-APA member who initiated the form letter (which included a recommendation to appoint herself as the committee chair) also published a falsehood about the upcoming Central Division meeting, claiming that some sessions were scheduled in rooms accessible only by stairs. This claim, which could easily have been disconfirmed before publication, precipitated worried letters from philosophers with mobility limitations. The act of publishing it threatened to have a chilling effect on participation of such individuals. Consequently, the Chair of the Inclusiveness Committee requested the Ombudsperson to conduct an official investigation of the claim. The Ombudsperson did so and sent a refutation of the falsehood to the discussion list.

Respectfully submitted,  
Anita Silvers