

ASTR *American Society for Theatre Research*

Minutes of the Spring 2013 ASTR Executive Committee Meeting Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center Room 2804, College Park, MD 2-3 March 2013

Present: Heather Nathans (President), Patrick Anderson (Vice President for Conferences), Marla Carlson (Secretary), Cindy Brizzell-Bates (Treasurer), Nancy Erickson (Administrator, *ex officio*), Gay Gibson Cima, Soyica Colbert, Elinor Fuchs, Brian Herrera, Suk-Young Kim, Kirsten Pullen, Jill Stevenson, Shane Vogel, E.J. Westlake, Kellyn Johnson (GSC Representative), plus Catherine Cole (Chair of Publications Committee) via video conferencing and Iris Smith Fischer (Chair of Awards and Fellowships Committee). Robin Bernstein joined the meeting at 1:42.

Absent: Leigh Woods.

The President called the meeting to order at 8:53 am.

Introductions were made. There were 14 voting members present, including the President as Committee Chair.

1. Adoption of the agenda.

MOTION: to adopt the agenda prepared by the President for the Spring 2013 Meeting. Anderson, seconded by Brizzell-Bates. Vote: 14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions. **The motion carried unanimously.**

2. Approval of the consent agenda.

The consent agenda includes the following items, available for review online prior to the meeting:

- Fall 2012 EC minutes with addendum recording online votes
- Election Slate
- Committee members
- 2014 Conference Planner

MOTION: to approve the consent agenda prepared by the President for the Spring 2013 Meeting. Moved by Pullen, seconded by Stevenson. Vote: 14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions. **The motion carried unanimously.**

3. President's report (Heather Nathans)

a. Update on activities: As noted in the President's Report, activities since the Fall 2012 meeting have included a creation of a joint response to the opinion piece published by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, a Leadership summit, and a meeting of the Consortium of Doctoral Program in Theatre. Advocacy was a frequent topic for discussion in each of these as well as in responses by the EC to strategic planning questions.

b. Proposal to adopt an organization-wide conflict-of-interest policy.

MOTION: to adopt the proposed conflict of interest policy (attached as addendum to minutes).

Moved by Westlake, seconded by Herrera. *Discussion:*

- *Clarified that this blanket policy would cover a similar issue that has arisen in connection with Awards and Fellowships, meaning that no separate policy would be required. Noted that this covers EC and officers but not individuals who are on specific award committees. Language could be amended in order to include a person applying or being nominated for an award for which she or he serves on the committee. Noted that if you're chairing a book award committee, and your publisher forwards your book for consideration, the conflict would extend beyond what stepping out of the room during discussion of your book could remedy. The person in question would really need to withdraw from the committee for the year. Suggested that we either strike "Executive" as qualifier of "committee member" or add the words "committee members" to refer to committees other than the EC. Administrator suggests an electronic vote after getting legal advice, particularly with respect to who this policy needs to cover.*
- *Noted that this policy as worded covers the legal issue that we are required to address, but the language that refers to kinship relations does not extend to encompass other close relationships such as teacher-student and other non-marital relationships. Suggested that we strike the entire paragraph about relationships resembling marriage. We might refer to "arms-length" relationships. Observed that academics are so intermeshed that it's hard to imagine a situation in which one doesn't have any sort of relationship with someone of interest.*
- *Suggested that we should remove the boilerplate language from this policy, making it as simple and clear as possible. In addition to the legal requirements, we need to provide guidance to anyone who serves on a committee or in other capacity, and this guidance should address the conflicts that actually arise for ASTR as specifically as possible. This guidance need not be provided by the legal document. Suggested that the legal conflict of interest policy applies to EC and officers and we need to develop separate policies for awards, conference planning, and other situations.*
- *Noted that the paperwork required if all members of the multiple award committees need to sign would be onerous. Easy for officers and EC to sign this statement, legal coverage is not as important for other committees. More important that we have a publicly stated policy for reasons of transparency, clarity, and ethics.*
- *Agreed that is to a large extent an honour code for members of these subcommittees, with . distinction noted between reading the honour code aloud to a student and having the student sign it. Proposed that an email confirming adherence to the policy might be sufficient. Suggested that the chair of the Awards and Fellowships Committee should have a yearly meeting with subcommittee chairs in order to review policies. Noted that the awards subcommittees are not legally liable, whereas the EC and officers are.*
- *Pointed out that the flip-side of this issue is the need for guidelines for leadership to avoid appearance of conflict. This proposed policy would cover the issues, but does not provide the guidelines.*

- *Noted that we discussed the issue last year, that ineligibility for awards is a disincentive to serve. Next logical step is to articulate principles under which they will be eligible.*
- *Clarified that this also applies to conflicts of interest on the Program Committee for which policy bars submitting a plenary proposal and practice dissuades submitting to convene a working session, although participation in working sessions is not considered problematic. This conflict-of-interest situation is handled on an unspoken honor code and through the blind review system. Noted that we also need specific policies with respect to expenditures from the Program Committee's discretionary fund.*
- *Noted that conflicts of interest arise if the Committee on Conferences evaluates submissions, because this committee was intended to open up access to conference themes and program chairs, to evaluate the conference and help the Program Committee to respond to the wishes of the membership. Clarified that two members of the Committee on Conferences serve on the Program Committee, and that these are the only members involved in evaluating submissions. Recommended that use the Handbook to clarify these issues rather than addressing them at a bylaw level, and that each committee needs to have this sort of discussion.*

MOTION: to table by Anderson, seconded by Pullen. Vote: 14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions. **The motion to table carried unanimously. EC can expect an electronic vote on this matter.**

c. Appointment of Catherine Cole to the EC through November 2013.

MOTION: to approve the appointment of Catherine Cole to complete Heather Nathans' term on the EC, ending November 2013. Moved by Cima, seconded by Kim. Vote: 14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Note: From this point forward (with the inclusion of Catherine Cole), 15 voting members were present.

4. Report of Vice President for Conferences (Patrick Anderson)

The VP for Conferences announced the decision to provide day passes to the conference for special guests. According to established practice, the Program Chair has paid full conference registrations for persons invited to attend a single session out of the \$3000 discretionary fund, which was increased to \$5000 as of 2012. The FY14 budget allows the Program Chair to register this type of guest for a \$75 day pass. Day passes will not be required for guests invited to present on a Local Panel, who rarely attend other sessions. This fund may be used for special expenses such as special speaker fees, performances, certain career sessions, assisting special invited guests with travel costs, box lunches for career session guests, and technical costs.

5. Treasurer's report (Cindy Brizzell-Bates)

Although the FY2013 budget showed a net income of \$4000, expenses that have been approved but for which we did not budget, such as changes to website and insurance costs, will actually bring us slightly into the red. Our robust investment accounts bring us up above where we were before the losses in 2007.

a. Investment policy: Each year, we calculate a three-year trailing average for investments and bring 4% of this amount into the operating budget, primarily to fund awards and fellowships. Because we are seeing our investments recover so well and we are facing increased costs, the Treasurer asked us to consider raising the withdrawal to 4.5%. The policy in the *Handbook* section D specifies a 4% withdrawal, but section E specifies that EC can revise this policy.

MOTION: to modify the Investment policy to state the following: “The maximum annual withdrawal from the portfolio is 5% of the trailing three-year average of the portfolio’s value as of December 31 of each year plus investment fees,” and to make updates throughout the *Handbook* to state that our new maximum annual withdrawal amount is 5%. Moved by Brizzell-Bates, seconded by Westlake.

Discussion: Although 4% is the standard formula for withdrawal from investments while maintaining the investment, our financial advisor said that the standard amount is 4-5%; when our investment accounts were smaller, we only withdrew 3%. The advisor didn’t consider this risky but would not recommend withdrawing any larger amounts, and this change does not require us to withdraw this much if it doesn’t seem prudent. The potential downside is that we would be pulling an extra \$3000 out of principal, which would therefore not earn for us. We assume that market performance will compensate. The Treasurer and Administrator have scrutinized many scenarios for maintaining fiscal health without placing undue burdens on the membership, and this increased withdrawal from the investments seems to be the most prudent course of action. Otherwise, we will have to eliminate things that we’re proposing to do or ask the members to pay for these things. This motion doesn’t specify how we spend the money or that we will in fact make this withdrawal.

Vote: 14 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention. **The motion carried.**

b. Budget: The proposed budget for fiscal year 2014 includes changes to annual dues and conference fees.

MOTION: to approve the Fiscal Year Budget 2014. Moved by Brizzell-Bates, seconded by Pullen. *Discussion:*

- *The proposed budget results in small net income based on 672 members, an increase from 657 in the FY2013 budget. We actually have 677 members as of 29 January 2013. The budget includes an increase of \$20 for individuals (17% change), emeritus \$20 (33%), and students \$10 (28%), representing a modest, psychologically acceptable increase. We haven’t raised dues since at least 2007, and this increase affected individual members only. Theatre Survey’s increase to three issues a year represents an improvement in service, our dues are low in comparison to other academic organizations.*
- *Although many members in the “individual” category can pay more than students, this category houses a large range of individuals, including adjuncts, unemployed, underemployed, all the way up to full professors. ATHE is instituting a tiered membership system this year, and we will be able to learn something from their experience in order to consider this for FY2015. Income range might serve as a basis for tiers, but due to huge differences in conference funding, even at the tenured level, we can achieve complete equity. Individual members are subsidizing the cost of*

membership for members in other categories, and in particular the large number of student members.

- *The comparatively high non-member rate, which is intended to encourage people to become members, might discourage interdisciplinarity. Temporary memberships might be a viable solution, and the Program Chairs should be in touch with working session leaders about this potential situation. If we were to eliminate the non-member fee, we would need to articulate a policy that membership is required to present.*
- *The increased costs include the required insurance to cover media, an increase in management fees as recommended by EC last year, costs at hotels, an increase in the number of conference fellowships provided for students to cover their conference fee in exchange for some work at the conference, and costs to revamp and manage the website. The increase in web management costs reflect the reality that the Webmaster has been regularly spending 20 hours a week on our work.*
- *An overview of the FY2014 budget shows: revenue increases 17%, based on investment withdrawal, projected membership dues and conference registration; expense increases approximately 13%; and a projected cushion of about \$3000. Different budget scenarios examined in arriving at the proposed motions include raising dues but not fees (-\$12,500) and making no changes (-\$27,000).*

Vote: 14 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention. **The motion carried.**

c. Administrator's contract:

MOTION: to renew the contract with Nancy Erickson as ASTR's Administrator for Fiscal Year 2014, with updated fees as described in the contract. Moved by Brizzell-Bates, seconded by Fuchs. Vote: 14 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention. **The motion carried.**

d. Clarification re: travel reimbursement for EC members

This amount was increased to \$400 based upon average airline ticket costs. *Suggestions were offered for adjustments to the reimbursement policy to make it as equitable as possible: eligible transportation costs should not be restricted to air travel; EC members with travel funds available may forgo reimbursement and consider this a donation to ASTR; the priority for any surplus in travel monies should be to cover the GSC representative's expenses; andn the policy should be sensitive to other financial vulnerabilities, because we cannot assume job security or income level for regular members of the EC.*

6. Secretary's report (Marla Carlson)

Three items noted on the Secretary's report require the attention of the Executive Committee:

a. Website history section: A chart that details all elected and appointed service to the Society for the three years 2009-12 is now available as a PDF file from a hyperlink on the webpage *About ASTR > Committees and Appointments*; proposed that we create a History section of the ASTR website for this sort of information as well as a record of award winners and conference programs, which would enhance transparency.

MOTION: to commission the Webmaster to create a History section for the ASTR website. Moved by Carlson, seconded by Stevenson.

Discussion: Desirable features include having the list of previous awardees linked to the awards page. At some point we maintained a list of all award winners since the beginning. This information is valuable for fundraising efforts and can help people who are emeritus feel connected to the organization, especially vital at a time when we're making a significant increase in the emeritus membership category. The information is available in the archives but is not publicly visible at this time. Perhaps ATAP could help us figure out how to archive and present our history, building upon our reciprocal relationship with that group.

Vote: 14 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention. **The motion carried.**

b. Bylaws Article XIV: The amendments to the bylaws missed Article XIV, which contains a reference to the Vice President as *ex officio* member of the Program Committee. *No action was taken, on the presumption that this matter was easily interpreted in context.*

c. Handbook updates: An appendix to the Secretary's report lists Handbook changes resulting from the approved bylaw amendments, as well as those provided by the outgoing Publications Committee Chair and Vice President. Committee chairs and EC members were encouraged to review these changes and inform the Secretary of any corrections needed.

MOTION: to revise Section III.D of the handbook, directing the Nominating Committee to draw candidates for VP of Publications from members of the Publications Committee. Moved by Carlson, seconded by Johnson.

Discussion: Friendly amendment specifying "from current or past members" accepted.

Vote: 15 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions. **The motion as amended carried unanimously.**

MOTION: to revise Section III.E of the handbook, removing the President's direct oversight of the Publications Committee. Moved by Carlson, seconded by Anderson.

Discussion: Noted that the handbook's language should be comparable for the different VPs.

Vote: 15 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions. **The motion carried unanimously.**

7. Administrator's report (Nancy Erickson)

Members have expressed concerns about conference hotels, including problems experienced in Nashville. *It was agreed that conference packets will include information about what action to take in response to such concerns. In particular, members should inform the Administrator about these issues at this time rather than simply reporting them to the concierge or front desk. Although the Administrator does research hotels, labor issues, and related problems as part of conference planning process, this could be made more transparent to both the Committee on Conferences and the membership. It would be advisable to develop a post-conference evaluative process and to include this in the Handbook.*

8. Report of ATAP (Susan Brady/Ken Cerniglia)

ATAP's work has continued non-stop since its inception in 2009 and will need the long-term support of ASTR to reach its goal of establishing archival programs at every theatre in the United States.

MOTION: to change the ATAP from ad hoc committee to permanent committee status. Moved by Herrera, seconded by Stevenson. *Discussion:*

- *ASTR initiated ATAP as an intervention into archive practice that would include practitioners as equal partners with libraries. We have received monies from the Lortel Foundation and dispersed those funds to ATAP.*
- *ATAP is at a point of growth and change, which requires a more clearly articulated vision for this relationship. Permanent committee status would ensure the continuation of ATAP if the current co-chairs step down from their leadership roles.*
- *Permanent committee status would protect us as fiduciaries. This relationship must be very clear if, for example, there might be a mechanism for making donations to ATAP through the ASTR website.*
- *As a structural issue, noted that the EC needs to establish procedures for deciding upon actions such as this.*

MOTION: to table by Pullen, seconded by Cima. Vote: 15 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions. **The motion to table carried unanimously. EC can expect an electronic vote on this matter.**

9. Webmaster's Report (Shaun Franklin-Sewell)

For the past three months, the Webmaster has been working twenty hours a month on ASTR matters. The budget includes funding to move the website to the Affiniscape platform.

10. Report of the Awards and Fellowships Committee (Iris Smith Fischer)

- Activities of the committee:** The committee is engaged in conversations with Jeffrey Jenkins of about the Barnard Hewitt Award, for which UIUC has doubled the monetary award to \$2000, to draft a letter of agreement and plans to create a comparable letter for the CUP Prize.
- Grants for Researchers with Heavy Teaching Loads:** The award committee proposed new language delineating the purpose of and eligibility for this award. Primary changes include moving the application deadline to May; requiring the applicant's chair to provide only a confirmation of eligibility rather than a letter of support, and limiting the amount of detail required in the budget statement.

MOTION: to approve the following changes in the description of purpose and eligibility for the Grants for Researchers with Heavy Teaching Loads:

In practical terms, the award provides:

- research support, which may take the form of [funding to obtain or travel to research materials \(i.e. archives, interview subjects\) or contributing to funding of research assistance or course release](#) ~~contributing towards course release, funding of a research assistant for one academic term, funding to obtain or travel to research materials (i.e., archives, interview subjects), etc.;~~
- registration ~~and travel~~ for the annual [ASTR](#) conference; and
- one year's membership in ASTR.

Eligibility: Any [full-time or contingent instructor at the college level, with a terminal degree](#) ~~scholar who holds a full-time or contingent, faculty appointment at institutions~~

~~where their~~ **and a heavy** teaching load ~~is of at least 4-8 courses a semester year~~ (or the equivalent **based on heavy production and/or service obligations**).

Moved by Carlson, seconded by Pullen.

Discussion: Friendly amendments reflected in the motion as recorded in these minutes included removing the specification that the award includes travel to the conference, which was an error in the description; and replacing the "8 course" designation with reference to a heavy teaching load, allowing the applicant to make the case. These changes are intended to make the grant accessible to the many scholars who should be applying for this award, for which applicant numbers have remained low. If they do not increase, then more substantial changes might be called for to meet the needs of our membership. Among other concerns, people may be put off by the stigma that might be involved with the title of this award.

Question called by Carlson. Vote: 14 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention. **The motion as amended carried.**

Note: With arrival of Robin Bernstein, 16 voting members were present.

11. Report of the Publications Committee (Catherine Cole)

This being the mid-point of our contract with CUP, a mandatory review of *Theatre Survey* will be conducted this summer following the protocol established by the press. This begins with an external review by ten people selected by the press across the discipline with diversity of area and point in career, followed by a second set of questions targeted to approximately twenty members of ASTR addressing both general topics and issues of specific concern to members. This is a greater depth of engagement than what we would ask in a membership survey, expecting the respondents to examine the journal quite closely. Results will be available and processed in time for the Fall meeting. The Publications Committee will review the press's standard questionnaire language and suggest changes as required. The Chair of the Publications Committee will consult with the press about confidentiality and about our access to the review data.

12. Report of the Graduate Student Caucus (Kellyn Johnson)

Activities of the GSC have centered on becoming an active caucus with more of a presence both online and at the conference. The discontinuation of raffle and other changes were received with applause and relief, and the GSC is glad to be represented on the Fundraising committee. The announced reduction in the number of hours required in exchange for conference fellowships and increase in the number of fellowships available will be greeted in equally positive terms. The GSC will create a welcome package for the Dallas conference as they did for Nashville.

Concrete suggestions from the GSC about mentorship include creating a best-practices guide for mentorship, formalizing the mentorship breakfast and organizing it around ideas rather than one-on-one meetings as well as scheduling activities at different times and places, and devoting a career session to mentorship. It was noted that the Dallas conference will include additional career sessions at different times. The GSC hopes to have a table or other presence at events that is positioned as a space for gathering rather than presentation.

13. Break-out sessions to discuss strategic planning

The President asked groups to use common themes that arose in EC responses to the Strategic Planning survey conducted in advance of this meeting as jumping off point for discussions intended to lay the foundation for further steps.

14. Report of break-out session groups

Group 1 discussed advocacy and what it means for the organization and articulated the value of intellectual exchange across rank and across disciplinary boundaries. ASTR can stand as an organization that defines the profession for our home institutions, for the academy at large, and for other theatre people as a way to advocate for the profession, its importance for all of the different members of the profession. We need to know what part of the membership is underemployed, whether and why they are coming to the conference, and how we can respond to their needs in a proactive way rather than just reacting to crises.

Group 2 discussed ways to make ASTR feel like a year-round organization such as asking what the organizational membership provides beyond *Theater Survey* and use elements of our strengths to address this. Another key theme was making it clear that ASTR is moving into the reality of the future. The definitions of theatre scholar and scholarship are changing and can accommodate all kinds of people. “Elitist” can mean good and rigorous scholarship. The Versatile PhD website might offer ways to celebrate the diversity of what theatre scholarship can mean. Given the high profile of our awards, it would be a good idea to develop an award in the next five years that celebrates non-print scholarship and recognition of performance and practice as scholarship. We might organize a conference around what constitutes a theatre or performance scholar and schedule career sessions that target senior scholars focused on mentoring students in this new environment. This would be valuable for the mentors but also send a very positive message to the students. Our discussions tend to be geared towards institutions with graduate students, whereas many of our members teach in other kinds of institutions, and we should use the membership survey to get more information about their concerns and situations.

Group 3 began its discussion by considering what ASTR should look like in five years and recommended the following: move into proactive rather than reactive mode; focus on advocacy and leadership; think about the hybrid job field; define the values of the organization; maintain stability in order to be altruistic when we can and generous when we can; address the needs of our unemployed or underemployed members; serve as a national source for advocacy for the profession. They identified as a valuable resource *Artistic Literacy: Theatre Studies and a Contemporary Liberal Education* by Nancy Kindelin (Palgrave), which integrates white papers about theatre departments and presents an impassioned argument that they should be the center of the university, then offers a step-by-step guide for how to make that case. This group talked about top-quality working groups, various entry points into the organization, and the need for more debate within the organization. They identified as a five-year goal that current grad student members will have become regular individual members. This group also discussed ways to develop a more explicit ethical standpoint for the organization and ways to better support people who are trying make livings within the world as it exists, noting that an ethical advocacy responds to the shortcomings of the current situation.

Group 4 identified a need for effective ways to respond to the threats facing the profession and discussed community building, commonality among diverse members, and our position at the vanguard of the field, noting that the organization has become more open to the diversity of membership and conceptions of theatre history. In order to assess progress, we need an effective mechanism for tracking and evaluating membership data. The group focused on publication and articulated the importance of identifying positive contributions of *ASTROnline* that should possibly be reinvigorated; insufficient connection between the conference and *Theatre Survey*; highly positive new developments in *Theatre Survey*. Other models for publication include the MLA's *Profession* and a similar vehicle for *Social Text*. We first need to clearly define the procedures for creating the journal issues, running the organization, and selecting sessions for the conference, and then communicate with the membership about these procedures.

15. Adjournment

MOTION: to adjourn. Moved by Stevenson. Second by Cima. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Sunday March 3

Present: Heather Nathans (President), Patrick Anderson (Vice President for Conferences), Marla Carlson (Secretary), Cindy Brizzell-Bates (Treasurer), Nancy Erickson (Administrator, *ex officio*), Robin Bernstein, Gay Gibson Cima, Soyica Colbert, Suk-Young Kim, Kirsten Pullen, Jill Stevenson, Shane Vogel, E.J. Westlake, Kellyn Johnson (GSC Representative). Catherine Cole and Elinor Fuchs via video conferencing.

Absent: Leigh Woods.

The President called the meeting to order at 8:36 am.

16. Continued business

The Administrator requested EC members to fill out and submit travel reimbursement forms within two weeks, and the Treasurer asked for email informing her how much it really cost each of us to attend this meeting.

ASTR conference locations were announced: 2015 in Portland, Oregon; 2016 in Minneapolis. We have been able to lock in a room rate of approximately \$159.

17. Strategic planning, continued

a. Discussion:

A chart comparing full-time, tenure-track faculty to part-time faculty shows the change from 1975 to 2007, raising the question of what the word "research" in our name will mean without all the support that made that research possible. How will the organization be able to meet changing needs on the part of membership? Significant effort will potentially be spent on offering more initiatives and more services. If this trend continues, we'll also feel a pinch on the staffing of committees such as this one.

Reports from the break-out discussions brought forward certain themes:

- Year-round engagement with *multiple* audiences and with multiple points of entry. How can the GSC sustain its energy throughout the year?
- Proactive advocacy and visibility. Local, regional, and national level. Raises question: what are you advocating? We need to prioritize, given the limitations on our time and energy and numbers.
- Need for centralized bodies of qualitative and quantitative data on the profession and on options beyond. Stories are great, but we need data to make compelling arguments. Our membership survey was valuable but was done four years ago. We need to make sure that we're assessing our progress.

Discussion:

- *In response to the suggestion that ASTR team up with other organizations to make sure that we're collaborating rather than doing overlapping work, the following potential partners were identified: . ATHE, SDHS, ASA, NCA, MLA, NAST, and BTN. TCG and the American Council of Learned Societies gathering data about the profession, and the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor is a clearinghouse of data.*
- *The nebulous identity of the GSC was noted. Their membership are all members of ASTR, junior colleagues who we need to bring into the larger community and make visible within it. How many different sites can we find that create these moments of exchange across ranks?*
- *Given the casualization of labor, the question was raised whether adjunct faculty have served on the EC and whether the Nominating Committee might seek out such candidates—it would be desirable to have more than one such person on the EC. Noting the sessions at the 2012 conference for those who teach in liberal arts programs, it was suggested that similar opportunities could be valuable for contingent faculty. Some people in adjunct and contingent positions may prefer not to make that status visible, however, and it was recommended that we focus on concrete practices that might alleviate the problems for all of us.*
- *Graduate students face difficulty in working group participation in that the dissertation needs to fit the working group's topic and structure, because there is no time for a side project. Holding a dissertation workshop within the conference framework was suggested.*
- *Other conference recommendations included instituting poster sessions, which might serve the needs of people with projects in progress; using Skype access for those who don't have the money to travel to the conference site; explicitly instructing working session leaders to consider diversity of rank as well as other sorts of diversity; creating conference review articles; making use of live blogging and tweeting.*
- *It was recommended that the GSC representative communicate explicitly to the graduate students that plenary review is blind, and graduate students should submit plenary proposals. They can also propose working sessions; however, working sessions are more likely to be accepted if a senior scholar participates as co-convener. It would be helpful to develop a formal arrangement for interaction between the VP for Conferences and the GSC. Both the call for proposals and the website could be more explicit in welcoming submissions from graduate students and contingent faculty.*
- *It was noted that faculty come to the conference to focus on intellectual work, which can implicitly support professionalization. At the same time, we need to reflect on the state of the*

crisis and professionalization, which has accelerated and can be stifling to the very things that have drawn us to this profession in the first place. Noted that even as we innovate, we should be careful not to alienate scholars who have been coming to ASTR for twenty or more years.

b. Task forces and ad hoc committees:

Task force on organizational sustainability:

- Concerns are fiscal sustainability, continuity, organizational memory, membership recruitment and retention. Conversation should not merely be about conserving rather than spending resources—we need to sustain vibrancy as well as money.
- Members: Cindy Brizzell-Bates (chair), Kirsten Pullen, Leigh Woods

Task force on engagement:

- Concerns are getting constituents involved in different ways, mentoring, involvement across the calendar year beyond the site of conference
- 3 types of engagement: within across rank, over time, across organization
- Members: Robin Bernstein (chair), Elinor Fuchs, Kellyn Johnson, Soyika Colbert, Gay Gibson Cima

Task force on collaborations and partnerships:

- Concerns are looking inside the organization and outside to other organizations for what it means to have proactive practices (embedded in everything else but in the foreground for them); finding out what other organizations our members belong to and what those organizations do really well, what practices we might wish to adopt; coalition building; perhaps focus on policy
- Members: Shane Vogel (chair), Patrick Anderson, E.J. Westlake, Suk-Young Kim

Task force on working conditions:

- Concerns are the challenges underemployed people face and the challenges faced by the profession; how we can use our existing strengths in order to promote as well as to mitigate. Noted that contingent faculty are not the only group under threat.
- Members: Brian Herrera (will initiate conversation), Jill Stevenson, Catherine Cole

Meta-committee

- This group will read Nancy Kindelan's *Artistic Literacy*, discuss the extent to which it provides a blueprint for implementation, and make suggestions to the various task forces
- This meta-committee can also make sure that all of the task forces are in sync
- Members: Brian Herrera (will initiate conversation), Kirsten Pullen, Jill Stevenson, Gay Gibson Cima, Soyika Colbert, Cindy Brizzell-Bates. The Administrator will contact the publisher about the availability of free or discounted copies, but EC members are encouraged to check their libraries as well.

c. Next steps for strategic planning:

1. Develop task force charges by April 1
2. Recruit and charge external members by May 1

3. Set timelines/agendas by June 1 with a goal of producing reports in time for our November meeting

We will discuss the recruitment of members for these task forces from outside the EC via email; noted that it will be especially useful to know if we have anyone within ASTR working on advocacy issues with respect to working conditions.

One additional next step that was noted but not explicitly outlined is to conduct another membership survey.

18. Adjournment

MOTION: to adjourn. Moved by Westlake, seconded by Anderson. **The motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marla Carlson
ASTR Secretary
19 April 2013

ADDENDUM 1 TO THE MINUTES

Record of Electronic Votes Taken, 4 March – 5 October 2013

1) MOTION: that ASTR provide one-year memberships to the student assistants who work with the Editor and Book Review Editor on *Theatre Survey*. Moved by Stevenson, seconded by Carlson. Voting conducted on 29 August 2013. 15 yes. 1 abstention. **The motion carried.**

ADDENDUM 2 TO THE MINUTES

Proposed Conflict of Interest Policy



ASTR Conflict of Interest Policy

Whenever any Officer or Executive Committee member has a conflict of interest with The American Society for Theatre Research, he or she shall call such conflict to the attention of the Executive Committee.

After identifying the issue, matter or transaction with respect to which a conflict exists, any officer or Executive Committee member with a conflict shall withdraw from any further involvement in that issue, matter or transaction unless a majority of the disinterested Executive Committee members shall determine that the conflict is (i) immaterial or not adverse to the interests of the American Society for Theatre Research, or (ii) the benefits of allowing the person with the conflict to participate in the discussion or consideration, but not the final decision, outweigh the dangers; in which case the person may participate in the discussion, study or consideration of the issue, matter or transaction, but not the final discussion or decision.

It is the duty of each Officer and Executive Committee member to disclose any conflict of interest he or she is aware of to the Executive Committee.

An Officer or Executive Committee member who is uncertain as to whether he or she may have a conflict should ask the Secretary for an opinion. The Secretary, in consultation with legal counsel, shall issue a written opinion which shall be presumed to be correct and may be relied upon unless challenged by an Officer or Executive Committee member, in which case the final decision as to whether a conflict exists shall be made by the Executive Committee members. The Secretary shall advise the President of the Executive Committee of each and every opinion issued. Opinions shall, to the extent possible, avoid the disclosure of personal information while, at the same time, disclosing the basis for the opinion. Copies of all opinions shall be retained by the Secretary and made available to the Executive Committee upon request to permit and encourage consistency.

The minutes of the meeting at which the disclosure of any conflict is made shall reflect that the disclosure was made and whether the person with the conflict withdrew, after making full disclosure of the matter in question and the conflict, and was not present for the final discussion of the matter and any vote thereon.

A conflict of interest exists when:

- (1) any Officer, Executive Committee member or close relative of an Officer or Executive Committee member has an interest in an issue, matter or transaction in which the American Society for Theatre Research has an interest; or
- (2) when any Officer, Executive Committee member or close relative of an Officer or Executive Committee member acts as an agent, representative or spokesperson for any person, business, group or organization, in order to influence the American Society for Theatre Research on any issue, matter or transaction.

An individual or organization has an interest for purposes of this policy if he, she, or it:

- (1) is an agent for a person or organization with an identified goal of influencing a decision by
the American Society for Theatre Research; or
- 2) would experience a material economic gain or loss from a decision by the American Society
for Theatre Research on an issue, matter or transaction identifiably different from the economic gain or loss that would be experienced by (a) a member of the general public,
(b) the holder of less than five percent (5%) of the equity in any business entity, or (c)
a
nonexempt employee of the American Society for Theatre Research.

Someone is a close relative if they are a spouse, a child, natural or adoptive parent, grandparent, grandchild, brother or sister whether natural, adoptive or by marriage of an Officer or Executive Committee member. The term also includes any other family member who resides in the same household as an Officer or Executive Committee member or shares living quarters with an Officer or Executive Committee member under circumstances that closely resemble a marital relationship.

In addition to the foregoing, an Officer or Executive Committee member should not:

- a. Use inside information--i.e., information made available to them because of their position as an Officer or Executive Committee member which is proprietary or confidential or otherwise not generally known to the public--for their personal advantage or that of any close relative.
- b. Accept any service, discount, concession, fee for advice or service or thing of value from any person or organization with an interest in an issue, matter or transaction in which the American Society for Theatre Research also has an economic or programmatic interest under circumstances that would suggest an obligation of the part of the Officer or Executive Committee member to exert any influence on the American Society for Theatre Research to enter into a transaction or adopt, alter or abolish any policy or position.

Each Officer and Executive Committee member will be given a copy of this policy and specifically asked to read it and sign the Conflict of Interest Policy Disclosure Statement upon his or her election, appointment or reappointment to his or her position.

_____ I have read the above Conflict of Interest Policy and I have no conflicts as described in
this
policy.

_____ I have read the above Conflict of Interest Policy and I have no conflicts, as described in
this
policy, except for those noted below or on the attached paper.

Signature Date

Officer or Executive Committee Member's Name (printed)
Approved by ASTR Executive Committee: _____