American Society for Theatre Research
Executive Committee Meeting Agenda
March 27-29, 2015

March 28 – Meeting held in Granoff Music Building, Tufts University

I. Call to order – 8:57 a.m. (continental breakfast served from 8:30-9:00 a.m.) & Introductions (5 min)

II. Approval of agenda. moved and seconded.

III. Approval of consent agenda
- November ABM meeting minutes
- January conference call minutes
- Confirmation of Carol Martin (NYU) and Brian Singleton (Trinity) to serve on publications committee
- 2015 Election Slate
- Conference Plan
Moved: Adam, Second: Jill

IV. Officers’ and Administrator’s reports (60 minutes)
- President (Heather Nathans, 10 minutes)
  ✓ Website updates and new features: Updated features on website; awards page, all info aggregated in one place, changes in capitalization. Making it more navigable.
  ✓ Hoosie Martin Foundation update: Hoosie Martin: Approved! Starting instruction at end of school year. Cindy hasn’t gotten info. HN will email them.
  ✓ Digital Humanities Project update: looking for best platform for material. Wiki or blog that’s sustainable
  ✓ TLA/ASTR Committee on Libraries update: TLA/ASTR Eric: can we help them with conf. call technology? Eric: Sure!
    Henry Bial talking about adding ATHE.

- Vice President for Conferences (Patrick Anderson, 10 minutes)
  ✓ Spread the word on new conference protocols: proposals are due in Sept. for the 2017 (Atlanta) conference. HN: we will pay for you to come to the one you plan and also the one before. --Didn’t pay for Josh and Jen in budget: Cindy, can this happen. Yes.
✓ **Discussion**: Jill: where on website is proposal thing? May not be there?

**Action Item**: Create a separate tab on the conf. page. Something on the front page. (AC to coordinate with Emily and Patrick)

✓ For this year’s conf. mentorship committee pre-conf on mentorship. Free to membership and pay for box lunches. Also an ATAP pre-conf. on Thursday. Spread word.

✓ Shane: do we have a position on right to work? Patrick: we asked for Insight, a company that helps people figure this out. to help us steer clear. Nancy did it ad hoc. Raised it with Ewald. Can there be an exit clause in case there’s horrific act of activism on Hotel chain? Ewald: Standard contracts will cover force majeure which can include labor. But that’s usually more about labor that keeps them from working.

**Action Item**: Ewald will discuss with their legal team to figure this out and see if we can stretch the exit clause.

Patrick: how do cities get picked? Hotel contracts. Ewald start to look at 2018 and 2019. Rates to go up. Can’t imagine a hotel chain letting you out of a conference based on the acts of state legislature. Due to go to Northwest or Southwest.

➢ **Treasurer (Cindy Brizzell-Bates, 20-30 minutes)**

✓ **Report on current budget status**: Things are good. We are ahead. Stay the course. Started taking 4.5% for budget a few years ago and we will keep that up.

✓ **Membership and conf. registration**: Not all members come to conferences. This is an opportunity. Where is the gap? Can also look at whether or not it is conf. location. Will west coast be lower? What about number of papers given?

✓ **Discussion Items**: New membership category to be included in 2015-2016 Budget. Suggested new membership and conf. registration category. Contingent faculty as defined by AAUP. Individuals: $135, Contingent: $90; Retired: $60; Students: $45. Category names were discussed. It seems the consensus was “Tenured or Tenure-track Faculty”, “non tenured-track or unaffiliated faculty” “Retired” “Student. The feeling was that if there were faculty who were taking advantage of the lower level and ASTR lost a bit of revenue, it was a worthy risk to take. It was also agreed that we should promote this change.

**Action Item**: Heather to email the membership.

✓ **Motion to approve moving to a tiered membership and conference reg model**: Patrick moved, Jill second.

✓ **Other budget items**: Couple of budget requests from conferences; the allocation went from $4500 for conf planners to $5000. Mentoring pre-conference workshop we are going to fund some food. GSC has asked to have its own budget line and we’ve historically said no (though provided money). We are going to give them $1000 budget line for this year. HN: acknowledges the strong track record of the GSC. CB: The way Kellen requested it was strong and clear.

- TS request for $3000 for party. In the funding we’ve had a $1500 for funding for editors, assistants. Harvey asked to get rid of that and to get $3000. We discussed it. The membership has asked for funding of grad students, conf. support, research support and we feel that the 3k request is not in the spirit of our organization. It was agreed that Catherine would discuss with Harvey. We would not take away the $1500 he does not need for editorial assistance but that we could not agree to an annual party and the $1500, per the Handbook, is discretionary. In the future, the *Theatre*
Survey report should go to the Chair of the Publications Committee and be added to his/her report. It was also mentioned that parties or events at the conference should go through the Conference Committee VP.

- Secretary (Amy Cook 5 minutes)
  - Updates on website, archiving Conference Programs
  - Discussion item: how might I help committees, conference planners, and working groups get information out or communicate internally or externally? It was agreed that no more tasks need to be added to the Secretary’s list. Heather also mentioned that at some point we will need to figure out how to manage the archives with no one on site. Adam asked about the ATAP report and Amy said she would follow up.

- Administrator’s Report (Ewald – 15 minutes)
  - UPDATE: It will take a solid year to fully adjust. Respectful request: please be mindful of the staffs’ newness. They are experts in their field but they are not experts on ASTR. Cindy is working with Amanda in accounting. Erin conference planner. Emily Fairell: she’s like Shaun but is backed up by a dept. of people with real IT expertise. There are 3 people in member services still answering phones during the conference. Eric is the single point of responsibility. It was agreed that all will try to be proactive and over-communicative in leading up to the conference.


- Vice President for Publications (Catherine Cole, 10 minutes)
  - Theatre reception for Theatre Survey coordinated by Ewald; Cambridge put into the contract commitment to support party every other year.
  - Archiving transfer of copyright forms from authors. They have been straggling out there from different editors. We need to make sure where they are.
  - Search for new ASTR Electronic Pub. Associate Editor to begin this summer.
  - Contracts for Theatre Survey editors in the works.
  - Based on a prelim report from CUP, we earned $27,202. All subscriptions going up.
  - Royalties that come in from reprinting essays: are they from recent ones or old standards? Catherine to follow up on that information and also the open access question.

V. Graduate Student Caucus Report (Kellen Hoxworth, 15-20 minutes)

  - UPDATE: Mentorship and Peer Mentorship and Networking Committees. Going to divide them. Will create a tip sheet for mentorship breakfast and standardize our follow-up procedure for mentees. Create a sheet for best practices for networking without an institutional base. Want to make it clearer that GSC meeting is open. Would like to have a gathering at bar
before opening party so grads are a bit more comfortable entering room.
Second event: Movement based event: activating democracy. Movement or game based
event to take the tension off the event. Patrick Anderson suggested they might want to
touch Jane McGonigal who last came to astr as a grad student and is now a game designer.
GSC to hold afternoon tea. Working on how to spread the information about where it is to be
held.

- **Elections.** Amanda Boyle, Ellen Davis, Stephanie Vella (?) running as president. We made
an adjustment to the GSC handbook: president two year term.
- **Internet resources.** Sara Taylor has stepped in. Want to figure out how to network more
horizontally with grad students at other contracts.
- **Questions:** The goals and functions of the mentorship breakfast was discussed, as well as
setting up parameters and etiquette for contact both before and after. Some discussion about
whether the word “mentorship” was right for this event but it was also mentioned that the
word is important to the membership. More possible positive outcomes. Mentorship is a
process, not a destination. We should also foreground the opportunity for the mentor to learn
something. Meet the Future of the Field. There was also some discussion of experimenting
with shorter times or possibly very brief meetings.

- **Awards and Fellowships Report (Brandi Wilkins-Catanese 10 minutes)**

  - **UPDATE:** Application process online. Thank you to Ewald in making the shift.
We’ll see how it works for people.
  - **Application language:** improve clarity.
  - **Discussion:** streamline deadlines for awards? It was agreed that the deadline for each
award should be listed by its name on the webpage. It was agreed that if moving from
9 deadlines to 4 deadlines made it easier for the chair, that it should be proposed.
**Brandi agreed to come up with a proposal.**
Should membership in ASTR be criteria for the awards? Not for book awards, but for
research funds it should maybe require membership in 3 out of the last 5 years.
**Brandi to come up with some language to propose so we can discuss change for
the fall.**
Future conversation: application yield and life cycle of awards. When do they need a
makeover? The amount of information required for each award was discussed.
**Brandi will bring potential changes to the chairs and then to the EC.**

**VI. Special committees**
- **Ad Hoc Committee on Membership (Analola Santana, 10 minutes)**

  - Soyica rotated out of committee. Some of the complaints are about the value the
members feel they were getting for their money. Concern that there are not
enough grants. And yet the money isn’t being applied for. Marketing and an effort
to publicize our awards was discussed. It was pointed out that we give out about
$25,000. Need to better foreground that. Jill pointed out the reasons to join astr
page and there was humor and a recognition that we need to work on this. This
was tabled for the afternoon.
✓ In terms of conference planning: concern about diversity. Understood in terms of cultural diversity as well as format and themes of conference.

✓ Many repetitions of a request to talk about the job market crisis.

✓ Outreach. Inclusion of non-tenure/tenure track people in terms of accessibility. Comments on mentorship: concern about the misunderstanding about it not being a lasting relationship. More specific kinds of mentoring.

✓ Marketing. Our main avenue is the website. Anything to do to improve.

• **Ad Hoc Committee on Mentorship (Robin Bernstein, 10 minutes)**

  ✓ We’ve had fruitful conversations. Tracy Davis is remounting her mentor-training workshop, which is great. Document that a subcommittee is working on to create a change in consciousness at astr around mentorship; we want to make clear that mentorship is circulating through various sites. We want to help session leaders take a second look at what they are doing to consciously foment mentorship in their sessions.

  Action item: HN to make a statement to membership about mentorship. And then it can live on the website. We hope to expose all the many places members can and should see mentorship happening; perhaps use testimonials.

  ✓ We will need a new chair.

• **Working Conditions Task Force (Jill Stevenson, 10 minutes)**

  ✓ An ATHE/ASTR collaboration concerning data gathering on working conditions already discussed with Patricia Ybarra.

  ✓ We did the what’s working tell me booth. Trying to show membership that we are working on this issue. Looked at all our feedback: lot of feedback on mentoring as well as questionable practices in hiring and job searches. We want to create a document that will articulate best practices about running a job search and finding new hires. What are the best practices for service, getting observed, etc.

  ✓ How do you make theatre depts. more visible? Online document about increasing visibility. Perhaps there could be a space on the website to post ideas, success stories, questions, challenges.

  ✓ HN: This task force has accomplished its task. Let’s make these projects happen.

**12:30-1:30 - Lunch break**

Themes to discuss as a group: Mentorship, professional development/professionalization, advocacy, graduate education/professionalization, blog strategies, white paper, reasons to join astr.
**Reasons to join astr:** Networking, WG structure is unique. Facilitates conversation, non-traditional conference format that focuses on collaborative exchange with rigorous feedback. Diverse: senior scholars and grad students and mentorship is happening both ways. With your foundations laid at ASTR, it can remain a platform for long-term career development. Manageable size, creates those opportunities for relationship. Stars of the field are at the conference and they want to talk to you.

Controversy: serious, sustained, arguments about what the field is, should be, etc. They are active in this organization. Debates opened about the nature of the field. We are committed to self-definition. Shaping the field through top-notch scholarship, in papers, publications. Dynamism. The place to see where and how the field is changing. Grad student involvement and active. Theatre Survey, which is under the auspices of the organization, as a record of its own work. Very smart work going on at astr.

At plenaries, working group. Jimmy: why not join? Because I won’t get accepted. I don’t need to be a member to publish in TS. Home base if there isn’t a place from year to year. Opportunities for inclusion. How does current structure militate against this? Points of entry? This amount of money for members for travel and research grants. Or Full amount available for members! Queer feminists successful revolution: some revolutions have been successful here. Academically nimble. Tweedy reputation. Evaluate our own history and performance. We should use the pronoun YOU rather than WE. Well-run organization. If I invest my time and money in the organization there’s infrastructure for it to invest in me. Liberates us to focus on each other. Time at organization can be more substantive. Every career break that I have had I can trace back to ASTR. Impact and visibility. “I like to think of service as leadership” There are many leadership opportunities. What do we offer to people who work in more politicized fields? Who is our audience? Who are we trying to capture? There are a lot of people in other depts. Who do theatre. We are not just US theatre, Maybe duplicate the language of what we are. Wordle? Recognition from a group of your peers. Mentorship? Trans-generational, trans-disciplinary relationships. Some are facts, some are subjective. Maybe it should be a combination between facts/stats and personal testimonials. Very short profiles with ASTR members. Things in process, not totally decided. There’s a sense of becoming. It’s not done, I’m co-making it. I like the profiles: Recreates the very dynamic we are trying to get at. State of the profession (maybe it shouldn’t be THE field).

Why did you join astr and why did you join the EC? Kellen: There was an Africanist working group in 2011. That got me in the door and then the star power of the conference got me to hide and then I found GSC. Analola: I joined when it was in Puerto Rico, I loved that there were so many people from so far away. Joined EC because you needed more diverse voices. It’s where I get together with my team: existentially important to keep the support together against the onslaught. Koritha: Working group thing blew my mind. Working groups might be the best way to describe why I got really hooked. EJ: I was initially intimidated but then Phil Auslander put out a call for performance and the law. Like Grad school, support, level of intellectual exchange you just don’t get anywhere else. Professional support during career transition. Finding an intellectual home, colleagues, conversations. I wanted to give back to the organization.

We have a table full of testimonials. Everyone at this table decided that they can be productive and make changes. I was recruited. Testimonials have to be different and really good. Have to be curated. Would be terrible to have a huge number of testimonials. How about a judicious blend of
the two? *Come back tomorrow with this list and decide what it should be. Distill it down to 6 points then figure out who would be the best person to convey this message?

**Action items:** Create a wordle of all the strong words we came up with. Testimonials along side the statistics/facts. Distill it down to 6 points then figure out who would be the best person to convey this message?

**Advocacy:** ATHE has an advocacy vp and portfolio. Maybe it’s too broad. Did research on what ATHE does and MLA. If we want to move forward, we don’t want to reinvent the wheel. So in what way can we make our advocacy specific to our field?

What are the most critical issues: mentorship, labor, intellectual freedom (people’s ability to participate/inclusivity), Archives (preservation and access); Graduate education/new paradigms, undergraduate education and research. Inclusivity. Collaborative work and interdisciplinarity. We need to redefine the success or failure of the work in graduate education. ASTR advocates for the absolute significance, relevance, importance, and value of arts research—in particular live performance research—for the lived world. How that begins to filter out into the world and into the members. But it’s still a bold claim and it’s one we still hold it. Lived condition of the people being asked to do all this work. If this is really what we believe, we have to care about inclusivity, and UG, and mentorship. Bridge to working conditions: importance of what we do to speak to administrators. Salary equity studies: mean salaries at peer private institution. Theatre, dance, and perf. Studies at the low low level. Our status is low. We need to aggregate the language that chairs are using to make arguments to our Deans. Kindalen was at ATHE. The presidents of theatre organizations need to go to conferences of deans to know the language they are using, their logic. Deans meeting might be more important than NHA or ACLS meetings.

**Action items:** distribute Chronicle of Higher Ed study. Catherine to forward UC study.

3:00 – 3:15 - Break

3:15.
- How do we make this visible to the membership? There’s all this caring and intensity we are putting to the issues they brought to our attention.
- How do we operate astr to be attentive to those things we are advocating for. Membership still doesn’t feel that we get it. What are the literal actual things we can do right now to make a difference.
- How can we manifest this in a way that makes a difference immediately.
- We can make arguments to the presidents, the deans, they are just waiting for them to teach them their line so that they can use the line to the donors to get more money.
- Do we want a Statement on advocacy, written now, and how it effects or informs these items. When we say we are committed, this is what it means. And where it will be visible in the future.

Mentoring group: *Document that a subcommittee is working on: create a change in consciousness at astr. We want to make clear that mentorship is circulating through all these
sites. Help session leaders to take a second look at what they are doing to consciously foment mentorship in their sessions.

A best practices document about what makes a good working session? Mentoring goes in all directions. When I think about excellent working group sessions: really great sessions, you watch how the conveners make the participants to name their stakes in what they are working on and articulates to the lived. On the ground, practiced, interdisciplinarity. Specific to that working group, coached out of the participants by the convener. The very best sessions have been ones that have provided a structure that allows for the work to happen.

Action Item: Convene the conveners before the conference! Explain best practices. Maybe doing a conf. call.

Additional models for mentorship if it’s not just the conference:

- Solicit membership to volunteer for 15 minute phone call that happens in between the annual conferences. Low stakes way to engage.
- City Circles: Could we convene a lunch in certain areas? Are there ways to facilitate that kind of outreach and mentorship. Theatre scholars, informal mailing list, who go to theatre together. Folded into mentorship. This would expand mentorship beyond grad students and would be easy and cheap. (Though there may be money to support such efforts) so they happen and get “tied in to the Mothership.”
- Afternoon of works in process papers.
- Mentoring other faculty/chairs about increasing departmental visibility. Pulling together ways of starting conversations across disciplines. “The Anarchists Cookbook.” Filled with strategies people have used to convince people. Talking to Provost. Share tricks. And show that it does work.

Action Item: Robin is creating a document that can be sent out to everyone in membership for regional action: 1) theatre going list. 2) works in progress; 3) Hastac out of Duke Digital Humanities. Strategies for teaching at all levels. It was discussed that this last might take work but perhaps it wouldn’t be too hard to add to the Hastac the work we are already doing.

Working conditions: 1) collaboration with ATHE 2) Best practices hiring document. Ybarra is doing a big data-gathering project with ATHE. Perhaps there can be a joint best practices document from ASTR and ATHE. We need a new protocol. Simple things: say thank you for applying. Let them know they are no longer under consideration. Be clear with your communication. And be transparent about what you are allowed to tell them. We got your letter, you are in the pile, this is the timeline. This is a form of advocacy that ASTR would be good at.

Action Items: Jill is going to work on two projects: dept. visibility strategies and white paper on best practices.

Day called at 4:26!

SUNDAY
Approved by EC on July 24th, 2015

8:15 – Gather in lobby of hotel to head to campus (please bring your luggage!)

8:30-9:00 – Breakfast on site at Tufts

9:00 - We reviewed what we accomplished yesterday:
--Contingent Faculty Rates
--Mentoring workshop (no fees & food provided by ASTR)

TO DO:
--White paper on job searches (MLA model)
--Recommendations from Mentorship Cte on options for extending outreach (strategies & level of support from EWALD) (city groups)
--Tip sheets for mentors AND mentees (different language and expectations)
--"Reasons to Join ASTR"
--Testimonials
--Data collection project with ATHE (job search/working conditions)
--More aggressive marketing ASTR generally (but particularly in area of awards, outreach, "reasons to join")
--BLOG -- "live" recommendations re: department visibility & strategies for promoting arts in the university
--Mentorship statement on website!

Ongoing:

• Inclusivity & Diversity --> outreach initiatives. An actual plan. Accountability for conference planners. Guidance and template. So they feel like they know where to send call for papers. List of places to promote and a way of making them accountable, that is embedded in the structure so that it outlasts the members of the EC.

• Is there a problem with the “blind” submission process? Its goal is to foster egalitarianism but it also opens itself to this color-blind ideology but blindness does not equal equality. The blindness effects those who aren’t already known. Perhaps we can ask proposers to self-identify—their status, race, area of inquiry, etc so that we can improve our diversity. They should maybe articulate how their project will extend ASTR’s diversity.

• We could change policy on the program committee. As it stands, the chairs choose the committee. We could select the program committee so it isn’t going to reflect a variety of perspectives. Once a proposal has been accepted from conference planners, the chairs will put forward a list and an EC would create the committee, based in part on this list. One benefit of this is that we would get a yearly snapshot of the field. This is coming from the membership, coming from below, not above.

• It was suggested that diversity in areas of race should be articulated in terms of whiteness.

• It was suggested that the respondents is another way to add diversity of race, area, voice, etc.

Action Item: Patrick will draft a proposal so that we can ideally have something to vote on earlier than the Fall meeting so we can roll it out for fall.

New Paradigms? There are clearly alliances with the Working Conditions Task Force.
• How and where are we recruiting? Can we use grad cohorts to recruit UGs? There is often money available to recruit non-white students: how can we improve our use of this?
• What do we need to do to educate faculty about grad programs and the possibilities of grad programs in theatre?
• Mellon Mays scholars. Have a conference every year. To get emissaries into those conferences to recruit. We can steal them from English. They may be thinking they are interested in drama but maybe they are interested in theatre. They are pre-vetted. Brandi’s experience: they are not at all inclined to drama. Depending on the sensibility of the organizer, there are recruitment opportunities at the conference. *It wouldn’t be difficult to ask the organizer to invite the organizers to get one of us to come along. McNair is public school counterpart to Mellon Mays. *Could ask recruitment at Cal. Gem is one at Michigan. *New paradigms can collect this information. And get ambassadors.
• Presidents Post Docs: 2 year program. After your 2 years, it creates a number of FTE, without counting against your program. Open to any one, not just UC people.
• International students are also interested in finding funding mechanisms, but this is more complicated as it’s a Federal issue.
• Still need a leader. Several names were suggested and Jill and EJ will email Heather the names.
• Koritha moved to rename “New Paradigms in Graduate Education” to “New Paradigms” and E.J. seconded. It was decided to table to motion until we can rewrite the charge of the committee. *Amy will rewrite charge.

Questions and go bell the cat.

—Election cycle for ASTR President
• Recommendation to move election back by a year so that the new president is elected during the second year of the current president to shadow the president, come to the spring meeting. There’s nothing in the bylaws that says we can’t—though we need to call it “incoming president” not “president-elect”. We should be very clear about what it means: attendance, no voting rights, no work. It adds a financial burden and complicates the final year of the president’s term for training and mentorship. It was also raised that perhaps it’s more time than we need. We might want to consider changing the bylaws. Right now it says that election should be held “at least 6 months before the annual business meeting”. If we are going to change the structure of the presidency we should go to the membership with it.
• Action Item: Heather to collaborate with Eric on a proposal re: timing.

Break: 10:25-10:36
Getting people in place.
• Jill suggests the WC/NP group might have what it needs with Carol Martin.
• Robin requested that Koritha take over the mentorship committee. What happens is going to be determined by the new chair, and the committee. 2 things that have to happen: ongoing conversation with the GSC and coordinating with the Career sessions. Koritha to consider and get back to Heather by Friday, April 3, 2015.
• Discussion of data gathering.
• Ewald can support, but the easy part is the mechanical part. What’s going to be more time intensive is going to be what it takes to craft the wording, etc.
• Catherine forwarded the UC Study and Kellen to forward the Chronicle Data.
• It is important to get data that is disaggregated. Ewald suggested that perhaps we may want to outsource the design.

**Action Item: Heather, Henry, Patty, and Jill (with Ewald) will have a conf. call to discuss and talk about getting bids.**

**Action Item: Heather will draft something on mentorship and run it past Robin.**

• In regards to marketing, Ewald mentioned that they have a PR person to be brought in to do some counseling time.

Blog: ““live” recommendations re: department visibility & strategies for promoting arts in the University.

**Action Item: Amy to get testimonials for why we join ASTR, corresponding to 6 themes.**

**Action Item: Amy will email Brandi and EJ notes and thoughts**

**Action Item: Brandi and EJ to come up with reasons to join astr (and share with AC and EC)**

**Action Item: GSC to create tip sheets for mentors and mentees.**

**Action Item: Amy to fix the stuff on website (re conf meetings) that doesn’t happen.**

➢ Thinking about outreach: Who are we not thinking of reaching out to?

**Jimmy and Analola will begin thinking about this, propose some lists of places.**

The question was raised about attending EC meeting without full reimbursement. In particular, the graduate student should be entirely compensated. It was agreed that this would be less of an issue if we agreed to meet in Chicago or Minneapolis. Ewald mentioned that would allow us to meet the entire team and have the conference center there as well. It was agreed that the final decision needs to be made by incoming president, but that we will strongly encourage him/her to consider Minneapolis.

11:20 Motion to adjourn: Patrick. Second. Jill