

## AAAS Section U, Statistics Annual Business Meeting

Saturday, February 14, 2009, 10 AM-Noon, Chicago IL

**Present:** [Steering Committee] Ron Brookmeyer, Bill Eddy, Joan Hilton, Mike O'Fallon; [AAAS Liaison] Stacey Pasco; [Others] Virginia Cain, Michael P Cohen, Keith Crank, Bob Fay, John Gardenier, Turkan Gardenier, Judith O'Fallon, Tom Santner, Leland Wilkinson (N=14)

**Welcome & Introductions.** Bill Eddy (Chair, 2009) reviewed Section functions, as spelled out at the Annual Section Officers' Meeting:

1. Develop proposals for symposia for Annual Meeting
2. Nominate fellows
3. Provide input to selection of members to AAAS committees
4. Encourage new members to join

He also reported on the results of the 2009 election for the Section on Statistics:

- **Chair-elect:** Joel B. Greenhouse, Carnegie Mellon University
- **Member-at-Large (until 2013):** Kenneth W. Wachter, University of California, Berkeley
- **Electorate Nominating Committee:**  
Nancy Reid, University of Toronto  
Mary A. Foulkes, JHSPH

Joan Hilton (Secretary) mentioned that election results are posted on the AAAS website, as well as at the Section's own website developed and maintained by Jessica Utts:

[http://www.epibiostat.ucsf.edu/biostat/joan/AAAS\\_U\\_website.html](http://www.epibiostat.ucsf.edu/biostat/joan/AAAS_U_website.html)

**Budget.** Joan Hilton reported that our Section's budget for 2009 is \$3800. A section may carry forward a rollover balance from the previous year of up to the current year's base budget. The base budget for the Section on Statistics is \$1900, up from \$1800 last year. For 2008, our expenses were

719.56 Travel for Asher  
522.19 Travel for Snow  
120.02 Food  
251.79 Phone Charges

**New Fellows.** Bill Eddy read the names and citations of the eight Fellows elected to Section U:

- Mark P. Becker, University of South Carolina, Columbia, USA
- Bernie Devlin, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, USA
- XuMing He, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA
- George McCabe, Purdue University, West Lafayette, USA
- George Roussas, University of California, Davis, USA
- Thomas Santner, Ohio State University, Columbus, USA
- Leland Wilkinson, Chicago, USA
- Bin Yu, University of California, Berkeley, USA

Names of all AAAS Fellows can be found at [www.aaas.org/aboutaaas/fellows/](http://www.aaas.org/aboutaaas/fellows/). Joan Hilton reviewed the three ways Fellows can be nominated:

1. The 24 Steering Groups of AAAS (members are listed at the AAAS website) can nominate Fellows in proportion to their primary membership count; for Section U, three Fellows can be nominated per year. The process of identifying candidates and soliciting letters takes some time; Bill Eddy and Joan Hilton worked on this from March through August.

2. Any three Fellows who are current AAAS members can submit nominations, as long as two of the three sponsors are not affiliated with the nominee's institution (early May deadline). The “3-Fellow Process,” with deadlines, is described on the AAAS website.
3. The AAAS Chief Executive Officer, Alan Leshner, can nominate Fellows.

**Session Proposals.** Joan Hilton reviewed the types of sessions held at AAAS meetings and the procedures for developing sessions.

Types of sessions:

Plenary sessions are selected by AAAS Board of Directors, end of April (2009: 51 ideas for 4 slots):

- \* Lectures – 1 hour (6:30-7:30 PM), 1 per day
- \* Panel – 1 hour, 3 speakers/session, only 1

Topical sessions are selected by Program Committee, end of May:

- \* Lectures – 45 min (12:30-1:15 PM), 2-3 per day, 1 speaker/session
- \* Panel – 1.5 hours (12-1:30 PM), 3 speakers/session, only 1

Symposia are selected by Program Committee, submit by end of April (including co-sponsorships):

- \* 90-min Symposium – 3 speakers/session
- \* 180-min Symposium – 6-8 speakers/session

Procedures:

- At business meetings, sections are asked to develop a list of three hot topics from their disciplinary perspective to present at the Planning Meeting for Section Officers on **Sunday, from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.** An officer will post these ideas on the *Session Collaboration Site*.
- The Secretary will enter viable proposals via *Symposium Proposal Submission Site*. A Section can propose any number of sessions. A volunteer is needed to shepherd each proposal through the system.
- Sessions selected by a committee in **May**. Proposals are reviewed online through a password-protected site. The review period lasted from May 5-27 in 2008. Mike Cohen, Bob Fay, John Gardenier, and Mike O’Fallon volunteered to serve as reviewers.
- Accepted sessions are scheduled in **September**.
- *Section Support and Interest Site* is opened in **November**. “Support” means our Section will contribute to travel support of speakers; “interest” flags sessions for our Section members’ attention.
- Judges are needed for the Student Poster Competition on the **Saturday of conference**.

Bill Eddy led a discussion of ideas for **AAAS 2010 ~ Theme: Bridging Science and Society**

- Bill Eddy
  - Will be chairing a meeting led by Ken Pruitt, former head of US Census Bureau (both academicians and gov’t stat’s), and a similar session at JSM (5 different speakers; gov’t statisticians). These speakers would be excellent candidates for an AAAS session as well.
- Mike O’Fallon:
  - Decennial census: Impact of homelessness, immigration, and the recession on the national census (Nancy Gordon’s name was suggested as someone who could contribute to this session)
  - Importance of decennial census to science of the next decade.

- Bob Fay mentioned *American Community Survey*; said 3 million households per year are sampled, 2 million respond.
- John Gardenier
  - Statistical methods for Human Rights. [Others interested: Fritz Schueren, Jana Asher, Bob Fay] John mentioned that he has already garnered a lot of support for this session from other Sections.
- Turkan Gardenier
  - Renewable energy resources: Can statistical methods resolve land-use conflicts?
  - Geographical Information Systems
- Mitch Gail (via e-mail):
  - Why economics seems to have such a problem predicting serious economic downturns, or does it? I don't know many econometricians who could refine and flesh out this topic. One distinguished academic at Yale is William Nordhaus. He might be a good organizer and/or participant. He was a classmate of mine in prep school. [Due diligent risk assessments: Failure to listen? Ron Brookmeyer, Leland Wilkinson, Tom Santner; Nell Sedransk, NIST - Fed Reserve.]
  - First fruits of whole genome scans for genetic associations with disease. What have they taught us about the genetic causes of complex diseases? Have they had an impact on medical research or practice? Do the associations that have been found so far have immediate utility in disease prevention or control? I could talk to you about potential organizers/speakers in that area, if there were interest. [Mike Cohen mentioned a talk held yesterday by Gillam, head of human genetics at U of Chicago; Leland Wilkinson said we need an open-source pharmaceutical company]
- Ron Brookmeyer
  - There are many false positive findings (false discovery rate) – how to address that?
  - Bob Fay: Amer Comm Survey idea may relate to this as well.
  - Tom Santner: Statistical significance and it's deadly impact on science
  - Leland Wilkinson: false discovery in visual data; Stan Young presented a session on this topic last year
- Bob Fay
  - How scientific reasoning might be taught in the USA. Can it be taught directly? He's working with Diane Halpern on this topic for Psychology Section.
  - Mike Cohen mentioned Keith Devlin
- Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch proposed the following session via an e-mail message sent before but received after AAAS-09:
  - Adaptive designs for clinical trials: The session would bring statisticians and clinicians together to talk about the methodology and implementation.

We agreed to the following as our Section's 3 hot topics, which will be presented by Chair-elect Mike O'Fallon at the Planning Meeting: (1) Census-related session (Bill Eddy will take the lead), (2) False positives (Ron Brookmeyer will take the lead), (3) Predicting the economic downturn (Mitch Gail will be invited to take the lead). [Follow-up: At this year's Council Meeting, attended by Bill Eddy and Mike O'Fallon, it was decided that each Section of AAAS will be guaranteed one session on the program.]

**Closing.** Bill Eddy mentioned the locations of upcoming meetings. Joan Hilton asked attendees if they are content with the time of the Section U Business Meeting. Ron Brookmeyer said Saturday at 10 AM works well for officers who attend the Annual Fellows' Breakfast beforehand. Another attendee mentioned that it conflicts with other business meetings but that this is unavoidable. We agreed to continue to meet at this time in the future.

Bill Eddy adjourned the meeting at noon.

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**Minutes of Annual Section Officer's Dinner Meeting**  
Saturday, 7:30 PM, Fairmont Hotel dining room

| Present: Ron Brookmeyer, Bill Eddy, Joan Hilton  
Unavailable: Mike O'Fallon

Ron Brookmeyer raised an idea he had proposed in the past, that our Section offer a *Mosteller Award* to a person who applies statistics in response to contemporary science. A certificate or plaque would be presented and ~~a year's membership dues~~ \$500 towards travel costs would be paid.

1. Ron was charged with drafting the objective more fully so that nominations can be solicited via an article in *AmStat News*. He will circulate it to other officers for input.
2. Joan was charged with identifying related tasks and developing a timeline such that an award could be presented at AAAS-2010.

Bill Eddy agreed to contact Katrina Kelner to ask where our Section's 2008 work on behalf of *Science* stands. [Follow-up: Bill found out that the *Science* review project is not finished yet for at least two reasons. There are a variety of people putting very small bits of time into it. In addition, Katrina is now the Editor of *Translational Medicine*, a new AAAS journal.]

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