

Mid-America American Studies Association (MAASA)

Spring 2012 Board Meeting – Sunday, April 1, 2012
Atrium, Main Hall, Oklahoma State University – Tulsa

Present:

Michael Krysko, Kansas State University: President and at-large board member
John Kinder, Oklahoma State University: Vice President and at-large board member
Jane Simonsen, Augustana College: Past President and at-large board member
Laura Belmonte, Oklahoma State University: Treasurer and at-large board member
Benjamin Looker, Saint Louis University: Secretary and regional graduate programs faculty rep.
Matthew Calihman, Missouri State University: at-large board member
Jeannette Jones, University of Nebraska: at-large board member
Ruben Flores, University of Kansas: regional graduate programs faculty rep.
Myrl Beam (via Skype), University of Minnesota: regional graduate programs grad-student rep.
Avery Dame, University of Kansas: regional graduate programs grad-student rep.
Adam Kloppe, Saint Louis University: regional graduate programs grad-student rep.
Randal Jelks, University of Kansas: *American Studies* journal delegate (non-voting)
Sherrie Tucker, University of Kansas: *American Studies* journal delegate (non-voting)
Justine Greve, University of Kansas: *American Studies* journal delegate (non-voting)

Absent:

Tina Parratt, University of Iowa: regional graduate programs faculty rep.
Derrais Carter, University of Iowa: regional graduate programs grad-student rep.
Unfilled, University of Minnesota: regional graduate programs faculty rep.

I.) Call to order

President Michael Krysko called the meeting to order at 12:29 p.m. CDT.

II.) Approval of agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was offered, seconded, and unanimously APPROVED.

III.) Approval of minutes from Fall 2011 meeting

A motion to accept the Fall 2011 meeting minutes was offered, seconded, and unanimously APPROVED.

IV.) President's report

Michael informed the board that all is going well with the association. He directed praise toward Laura and John for their hard work on the conference, and the board members offered their applause.

Michael informed the board that not a single proposal had been received for a Spring 2013 joint conference. One group in Missouri had submitted a query before the Feb. 1, 2012, deadline, but had not followed up with a proposal.

Randal asked how much is typically spent on MAASA conferences. This led into a discussion of whether any money was returned by the Wisconsin organizers of the Spring 2011 joint conference. Laura offered that the board ought to discuss whether a conference should be held each year. Michael asked that all these questions and comments be held for the discussion of the upcoming conferences later in the meeting.

V.) Financial report

Treasurer Laura Belmonte explained that she did not have a financial report, because the executive director, Kathleen Wells Morgan, had not had time to prepare the necessary account documents. The executive director has assured the president, however, that MAASA is solvent.

VI.) *American Studies* editors' report

Sherrie circulated an agenda for the editors' report along with a financial report. Sherrie thanked Avery and Justine for their efforts on behalf of the journal, and announced that Avery would be going on to a Ph.D. program at the University of Maryland – College Park, and hence would not be continuing with the journal.

Avery gave an update on the status of current and upcoming issues, along with an overview of the printing schedule. Sherrie summarized the financial report distributed earlier, noting the recent receipt of \$27,000 from Project Muse and other database subscription services and permissions fees. Randal expressed a wish for board members to build a larger base of subscribers. He noted that the basic subscription rate is \$35. Randal noted that KU would like the journal to go to open access but that it is not offering to replace any income currently associated with subscriptions and database contracts. The editors then announced that the journal office will be sending issues to all MAASA members who are members by virtue of their ASA membership. The ASA sent the wrong membership list to the journal editors, but this will soon be rectified.

Jeannette asked about *American Studies*' ranking, and Sherrie responded that the journal is ranked but that the editors did not have that information with them. Sherrie noted that the journal was not being indexed, and hence not ranked, in the United Kingdom, which had created difficulties with a U.K. author who was not credited by his or her institution for an article published in *American Studies*. Randal noted that now that he and Sherrie are fully in charge of the journal, many issues are being addressed that had not been addressed by the previous journal leadership. Jane noted the importance of urging American Studies departments to hire faculty with American Studies doctorates, and of urging American Studies faculty to publish in American Studies journals. A discussion ensued about what makes *American Studies* unique among other American Studies-oriented journals. Jeannette, Randal, Sherrie, and Laura then engaged in a dialogue about special issues and promotion of physical copies of the journal at meetings and other locations.

Randal mentioned the promotional advantages of a printing/publishing deal with a major university press. Jeannette urged Randal to look also at University of Nebraska Press, along with discussions already begun with University of Illinois Press and University of Chicago Press. Sherrie noted that the journal's finances might become confusing during the changeover period after a deal was struck with a university press; this might disrupt current database subscription income. Sherrie noted that any deal must include the KU-based office keeping graduate editorial assistants on staff.

Matt asked for an explanation of the Powell's income on the financial report, and Avery explained that incoming books that don't get reviewed are sold to Powell's. Randal noted that the previous editors did not spend time promoting and selling the journal. Jeannette said that the journal ought to attempt to get at

least 100 submissions a year. Avery replied that the lower submission numbers are an effect of the journal being so far behind; this deterred people because they thought (incorrectly) that they would need to wait for three years for their pieces to be published. This problem will diminish as the journal finishes getting caught up on issue numbers.

Ruben and Laura suggested that the editors be charged with developing a report to the board with a request for authorization to spend money during the transition to university press publication. Sherrie noted that David Katzman used to take care of the budget, and that Randal is doing it now. The editors used to ask MAASA for a certain amount each year, and then obtain that money in small increments from Kathleen. Sherrie said she would like to make a request for the entire 2012 operating budget all at once. Laura asked for specific line items in such a request. Sherrie replied that the journal would like \$24,000 for 2012 expenses, covering items such as postage, office supplies, email accounts, newsletter, travel for editors, new equipment, and sundries. A discussion ensued about how much money to allocate to the journal. Laura and Ruben suggested giving the journal \$30,000 for 2012 so that the editors will not need to return to the board for further financial requests.

Randal said that editors should attend more conferences to promote the journal. Board members suggested other conferences to attend. Matt suggested periodic reminders about the journal on H-Net; and Avery said that this is something Matt Thomas could be asked to do. Randal volunteered to have the journal begin making H-Net announcements. He also noted a new blog page that will have book reviews and review requests. Avery noted that such reviews will be more pop-culture oriented in order to attract search-engine traffic, and added that there will be an online pedagogy section to attract readers from teaching institutions in the MAASA region.

The board paused for lunch at 1:25 p.m.

Randal made a motion that journal editors be authorized to negotiate with university presses regarding said presses taking over certain journal tasks, and that the editors are to report back to the board with the results and their recommendations on such a move. The motion was seconded and APPROVED. (Avery abstained from voting.)

Randal noted that he will provide a detailed budget to board regarding use of MAASA funds. The board determined that its budget runs on a calendar-year basis. A motion was made and seconded to approve expenditure of \$30,000 for the journal. During discussion of the motion, Ben asked how much the journal has received from MAASA during the current calendar year, and Randal replied that the journal has received \$3,000 thus far. The motion was APPROVED. (Avery abstained from voting.)

VII.) Journal review

Michael updated the board on the journal review process, which is mandated by the MAASA constitution. He explained that Ben Chappell is no longer leading the review. Ben Chappell informed Michael that Matt Mancini at SLU and Pauline Turner Strong at UT-Austin had tentatively agreed to serve on the review committee. Ben Chappell offered in writing his suggestions for a specific schedule and for a third committee member.

Ben suggested that Michael solicit a third member from Ben Chappell's list of suggestions of people at KSU. Jeannette suggested that the External Review Guidelines passed along by Ben Chappell be transmitted to the committee, but that the review schedule be altered. Ben suggested a higher honorarium for reviewers. Ben noted that, at the March 2010 board meeting, \$4,000 had been allocated for the review plus \$750 total for honorariums. The board engaged in a general discussion about how the review would operate and whether there would be a self-study report produced by the editors for the reviewers' use.

Jane and Ben suggested that the board provide reviewers with the documents it currently has, and that the journal give the reviewers a modified version of the journal overview created for the now-completed institutional bid process. The reviewers would be told that they can come back to the board if they desire more specific instructions. Michael asked the board whether he could give the review document in front of the board directly to potential reviewers. Ben replied that Michael should, but that the final report of the last journal review be provided to the new reviewers as well. Everyone agreed on this course of action.

Ben made a motion that the board increase the honorarium for reviewers to \$500 each, for a total expenditure of \$1,500 on honorariums and a total expenditure on the review process of \$5,500. The motion was seconded by Jeannette and it was APPROVED unanimously (with Avery abstaining).

Michael told the board he would provide names of KSU colleagues who might be potential reviewers to the board via email, that others would then be invited to add names, and that the board would then be invited to rank the potential reviewers via electronic vote with deadline. Jane suggested that the board aim to have the review underway in September, and Randal and Sherrie concurred.

VIII.) Committee reports

A.) Stone-Suderman Prize

At the Fall 2011 board meeting, Jeannette, Myrl, and a journal editorial-board member to be designated by Randal were appointed to serve on this committee. Jeannette reported that the committee had not chosen prizewinners for Volumes 49 and 50 because those volumes had not been sent to her by the editorial office. Randal reported that he had not yet designated an editorial board member to serve on this committee.

Randal indicated that he would send Volumes 49 and 50, along with the newly completed Volume 51, to Myrl and Jeannette, and that he would ask editorial board member Robert Kent to join them on the committee. Jeannette and Myrl indicated that they would choose three winners—one from each volume—and report these to the board before or at the Fall 2012 board meeting.

B.) Katzman-Yetman Prize

Matt reported that two papers were submitted for consideration for this prize. The three-person selection committee unanimously selected a paper by Elyse Vigiletti of the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, entitled “Class, Sexuality, and Authorship in Patricia Highsmith’s *The Price of Salt*.” The winner will not be at the MAASA reception for presentation of the award.

Sherrie asked how to accomplish the procedure whereby the winner of this prize is promised that the paper would “automatically be considered for publication in *American Studies*.” She explained that this had caused problems in the past if the winning paper was not recommended for acceptance by outside readers. Jane suggested that the board eliminate this promise from the prize language going forward, and replace it with language regarding the automatic placement of the regional prize papers onto an ASA panel with support for travel to the ASA.

Ruben offered to write new text for the website’s Katzman-Yetman Prize page containing this change, and to convey that new language to webmaster Matt Thomas. Jane offered to have Kathleen make out a check to the prizewinner and have it sent to Matt Calihman. Matt agreed to write a letter on behalf of MAASA to the prizewinner. Ben agreed to send Matt MAASA letterhead for this letter. Ruben agreed to send Matt information on the ASA benefits conferred to the regional prizewinners. Matt will package up

the information from Ruben, the check from Kathleen, and his own letter, and send these to the prizewinner.

C.) Kolmer Award

Jane and last year's winner, Marguerite S. Shaffer, served as the selection committee. The committee received numerous letters nominating Matthew Mancini of Saint Louis University, and the committee chose him for the award. Jane has obtained a check made out to Matt Mancini, and she has obtained MAASA glassware for him. These will be presented at the membership meeting.

While on the topic of glassware, Jane also reported that she had obtained glassware for Mary Ann Wynkoop of UMKC, as directed by the board in Fall 2011, and that she had conveyed this thank-you gift to Mary Ann. The board thanked Jane for her work.

Ben asked whether Jane and Matt would send information and photos about the Kolmer and Katzman-Yetman winners to Matt Thomas for the website, and both agreed to do so.

D.) Nominating Committee – new board members

The board took time to assess which members had terms expiring on June 1, 2012, under the new term lengths as decided and adjusted at the Fall 2011 meeting. Ben as secretary reported that Laura and Michael have terms expiring on June 1. Michael indicated that he would like to serve another term. Laura indicated that she did not wish to continue on the board. A motion was made and seconded for Michael to be recommended to the membership meeting for another At-Large term; the motion was APPROVED. Ben reminded the board that Michael's new term, along with confirmation of Matt's current term, should be voted upon at the membership meeting on April 2.

Several board members commented that they would appreciate more information about American Studies and related programs in the region. The board discussed whether to ask Matt Thomas to research the issue and create links to such programs on the MAASA website, and reached consensus that this would be useful and appropriate. Michael indicated that he would ask Matt Thomas to do this by June 1, 2012. Sherrie urged that such programs or departments be informed that we are linking to them and ask them to create web links back to MAASA.

A general discussion ensued about how to fill open At-Large seats. Randal and Jeannette expressed preferences for various states and institutions to be represented. Jane noted that a Macalester representative would be quite useful. Ben suggested that a nominating committee be reconstituted; and that it be charged with producing a list of candidates and reporting back to the board via email. An email vote would then be held in time for these new members to participate in the Fall 2012 board meeting. Under the new constitution (if it is approved by the membership), these members would be able to participate with full voting rights but their memberships on the board would be subject to confirmation at the next membership meeting. Michael, John, and Jane volunteered to serve on such a committee. John made a motion that such a membership committee be so constituted and charged; the motion was seconded and unanimously APPROVED.

In order to determine how many seats are currently open, the board must decide what to do about the Minnesota faculty seat, which has not been filled by the Minnesota program in recent memory. Ben made a motion to alter the approved agenda, moving "Consideration of options to fill Minnesota's seat on the Executive Board" and "Nomination and election of new officers" forward so that these can be discussed immediately; the motion was seconded and unanimously APPROVED.

IX.) Consideration of options to fill Minnesota's seat on the Executive Board

Ben noted that, at the Fall 2011 meeting, Myrl had offered to speak with Minnesota faculty in American Studies and related programs and departments to assess interest in filling the seat. Myrl reported via Skype that Minnesota faculty members were not interested in filling the seat.

Ben offered the following motion: Upon approval of the new constitution by the membership, the University of Minnesota permanent faculty seat on the MAASA board shall be suspended through at least June 1, 2014, on account of non-attendance, and the nominating committee is charged with proposing candidates for a new At-Large seat that will be created for a two-year term to replace the Minnesota permanent seat. The motion was seconded and unanimously APPROVED.

Discussion turned to the lack of attendance by the current occupants of Iowa's two permanent seats. The board debated whether letters should be sent to the University of Iowa permanent seat-holders, and/or the department chair, to indicate that these permanent seats would be put in jeopardy if the department did not send representatives to the next meeting. This led to a discussion of whether the new attendance policy, to be put into effect upon approval of the new constitution by the membership on April 2, 2012, would retroactively count meetings missed before the constitution's approval under the new missed-meeting policy. Ben referred to the Spring 2011 meeting minutes where it was decided that the new policy would be retroactively applied to previous missed meetings; he also reminded the board that the four graduate program's chairs had been informed of the impending adoption of this policy in a Spring 2011 letter that he sent to them at the direction of the board.

The board directed Ben, as secretary, to send a letter to the Minnesota American Studies chair informing that department that its faculty board seat had been suspended through June 1, 2014, and including procedures for reapplication. The board directed Ben, as secretary, to send a letter to the Iowa American Studies chair informing that department that one more missed meeting by its faculty representative or its graduate-student representative would put both of those permanent seats at risk of suspension by the board.

X.) Nomination and election of new officers

The board affirmed that current vice president John Kinder, under succession rules in the new constitution up for membership vote on April 2, will automatically become MAASA president on June 1, 2012. John will become the twenty-third president of MAASA since the organization emerged from the 1984 merger of the Midcontinent American Studies Association (MASA) and the North Central American Studies Association (NCASA).

The board determined that the vice presidential, secretarial, and treasurer positions will become open on June 1, 2012. Ben and Laura informed the board that they would not be continuing beyond their current terms as secretary and treasurer, respectively.

Matt was nominated for secretary; this nomination was seconded and APPROVED. His one-year term begins on June 1, 2012.

Jane was nominated for treasurer by John; this nomination was seconded and APPROVED. Her one-year term begins on June 1, 2012.

The group discussed potential candidates for vice president. The vice president is expected to organize the conference before automatically ascending to the presidency the following academic year. Since the board has not decided whether to have a Spring 2013 conference, the duties for the vice president during the 2012-13 year are currently unclear. Ben offered a motion to delay discussion of a new vice president, and

to alter the agenda in order to move to an immediate discussion of upcoming conferences; the motion was seconded and APPROVED.

XI.) Conference planning – 2013 & 2014

John reported on the number of proposals for the current conference, on the good attendance despite weekday scheduling, and on the large number of OSU students who are expected to attend. Michael reported that no proposals for a Spring 2013 conference with MAASA had been received, despite the call for proposals being circulated to the MAASA mailing list and via H-Net (H-Amstdy).

The group considered whether to change MAASA's conference schedule from one per year to one every two years. Matt asked whether there are many other professional associations that do the same; board members offered various examples. Jane explained how and why the current system (alternating MAASA conferences and joint conferences) came into being. Several board members spoke in favor of simply having a MAASA conference every two years. Ben proposed that, instead of changing the schedule permanently, MAASA simply decide to have no conference this coming spring and to reassess in future. Since no joint-conference proposals were received, no conference need be held. A MAASA conference could then be held in Spring 2014, and the board could decide later on whether or not to pursue a joint conference again in Spring 2015.

Ben made a motion that no MAASA conference be held in Spring 2013, and that the board select a Spring 2014 conference location at the Fall 2012 board meeting. The motion was seconded and APPROVED.

XII.) ASA reception

The discussion moved toward MAASA's participation in the ASA conference. In response to the question of whether the president will attend the ASA conference, the board indicated that he should. Jane noted that the board did not need to vote to allocate funds for this, because it is an automatic expenditure.

The board discussed whether the president ought to organize a MAASA reception at the ASA conference. Michael, based on his experience doing this in Fall 2011, reported that it was a nice event but probably not the best use of MAASA funds. Jane reminded the board that the job of organizing a reception is the responsibility of the regional chapter representative, not the president. Several board members proposed eliminating the reception. Jane recounted the history of MAASA's ASA conference receptions and why the board has recently made them open bar. Ben suggested that the regional chapters representative investigate costs and report back via email. Sherrie emphasized that having the reception outside the hotel would be a mistake. Myrl asked why a reception was necessary or useful, to which Jane responded that it was a fun opportunity for the region's constituents to spend time together. Randal noted that, with no MAASA conference scheduled for Spring 2013, the board ought to ensure that a reception is held in Fall 2012. The question was raised of whether the region's four Ph.D. programs would contribute funds, and Ruben agreed to investigate this.

Jeannette offered a motion that an open-bar MAASA reception be held at the Fall 2012 ASA conference, that MAASA allocate \$1,000 plus any contributions from regional departments toward this cost, and that the reception be formally listed as sponsored by MAASA, *American Studies*, and any contributing departments. The motion was seconded and APPROVED.

The board discussed whether to limit the time during which the reception is held, to cut down on the number of drinks paid for by MAASA. Michael reported that MAASA cannot limit a reception by number of drinks (i.e. the bartenders will not keep a running count for us), and that conversion at some point to a cash-bar procedure would necessitate payment of a \$300 cashier fee. The board decided on a one-hour open bar reception.

The board noted that Ruben would be organizing this reception, and Ruben was thanked in advance for his efforts. Ruben agreed to ensure that an announcement is placed in the ASA conference program, and that the announcement will clearly note the sponsors as listed above.

Randal left the meeting at 4:18 p.m.

The group returned to the question of a vice president. Jeannette volunteered to be the vice president for a one-year term starting on June 1, 2012. The group discussed the procedure by which the vice president automatically becomes president at the conclusion of his or her term. A board member nominated Jeannette for vice president; the nomination was seconded and APPROVED.

Ben left the meeting at 4:25 p.m., and Adam assumed minute-taking responsibilities as Acting Secretary.

XIII.) Proposed MAASA resolution on labor and hotels

Matt went through some of the changes that he had made to the resolution text in order to temper some of the language. Avery moved that the resolution be approved; Jeannette seconded. The resolution was APPROVED. A discussion ensued about whether to put this on the MAASA website. Then it was discussed whether the membership would vote on this at the general membership meeting. It was decided that the general membership would vote on it tomorrow.

XIV.) Proposed Arizona Ethnic Studies resolution

Ruben discussed the proposed resolution that was forwarded to the board about the restrictions on ethnic studies recently adopted in Arizona. Myrl suggested that the board update some of the language in Section 4 to reflect the ongoing nature of the issue. The language was amended from “have been historically significant” to “are significant both historically and in the present.” Jeannette moved that the board accept adopt the resolution with the amendment, Matt seconded. The amended resolution was APPROVED. The board decided that the resolution would be distributed to the general membership tomorrow and that Ruben would provide copies.

XV.) Constitution and Bylaws

Michael noted that he had on hand a copy of the amended constitution approved at the Fall 2011 board meeting. The new constitution still needs approval by the membership in order to take effect. Michael said he would forward this to Laura so she could print out copies for distribution and membership vote tomorrow.

XVI.) Website/webmaster report

Michael will forward Matt Thomas’s report to the board. There have been several new things added to the website in recent months. It helps the website serve as an archive for the organization. Several of these changes, including a new blog, were already discussed. The webmaster wanted to send out another newsletter, but said that he needed more information about some of the things that happened at the conference from the board members. John offered to send him all of the relevant information.

XVII.) New business

No new business was announced.

XVIII.) For the Good of the Order

Jeannette moved to adjourn; Avery seconded the motion. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

**Mid-America American Studies Association (MAASA)
Spring 2012 General Membership Meeting – Monday, April 2, 2012
Oklahoma State University–Tulsa**

Adam Kloppe, Acting Secretary, recording

Vice-president John Kinder, presiding in the absence of the president per MAASA Constitution Article III, section B, opened the meeting and called it to order.

I.) Approval of Agenda

Carol offered a motion that the agenda be approved. Stacey seconded. The motion was APPROVED.

II.) Membership Vote on the New Constitution

John opened a discussion of the approval of the new constitution. Laura brought up that we changed the term lengths for MAASA board members, the position of treasurer was added, and some of the duties of the board members were clarified. She also mentioned an amendment about digital voting for board members. Carol moved to approve. Jane seconded. There was no discussion. The motion was APPROVED.

III.) Membership vote to confirm new and continuing board members

John opened discussion about approval of Matt Calihman. It was moved to approve him; the motion was seconded and APPROVED.

John opened a discussion to reappoint Michael Krysko to a new term as an At-Large board member. It was moved to approve him; the motion was seconded and APPROVED.

IV.) MAASA resolutions

John noted that the MAASA board had written and passed a resolution to support fair working conditions for hotel labor staff. He read the resolution to membership. Laura brought up some of the ways that the wording was changed to support both MAASA and hotel labor. Jeannette mentioned that we would do our best to find hotels that supported union labor, but brought up some of the limitations of this in our region. A motion for the membership to adopt the resolution was made and seconded. The motion was APPROVED.

John noted that the board had written and passed a resolution to support ethnic studies in Arizona. Laura explained the recent Arizona law abolishing ethnic studies in public and charter schools. Matt Mancini proposed an amendment to eliminate point number one under the resolution because the text ought not to discuss intentionality. Carol suggested that the wording be changed to note that ethnic studies “often serves as a corrective to...” It was suggested that all the “therefore” sections be moved to the “whereas” section, and that the last section be headed with “therefore be it resolved.” Jane made a motion for the membership to accept and approve the resolution, the motion was seconded, and the motion was APPROVED.

V.) Announcement of the 2012 MAASA prize winners (Katzman-Yetman, Kolmer)

John opened discussion about the awards. The Katzman-Yetman award for papers was awarded to Elyse Vigiletti of the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, for the conference paper entitled “Class, Sexuality, and Authorship in Patricia Highsmith’s *The Price of Salt*.” The membership broke into applause.

Jane stood to announce the 2012 recipient of the Kolmer Award for mentorship and service. The winner is Dr. Matthew Mancini of Saint Louis University. The membership broke into vigorous applause. Jane read selections from several of the letters that recommended Matt for the award. Jane presented Matt with highball glasses engraved with the MAASA logo. Matt expressed his gratitude and the crowd broke into applause again.

VI.) New Business

John opened the floor to new business. There was none.

VII.) For the Good of the Order

John closed the meeting. The crowd applauded again.