

Mid-America American Studies Association
Agenda, Executive Board Meeting
September 13, 2009
Kansas City, Missouri

In attendance

Jane Simonsen (Augustana, at large)
Richard Schur (Drury, at large)
Randal Jelks (Journal)
Ben Chappell (Kansas faculty rep)
Michael Krysko (Kansas State, at large)
Milton Wendland (Kansas student rep)
Kim Marra (Iowa faculty rep)
Tom Sarmiento (Minnesota grad rep)
Laura Belmonte (Oklahoma State, at large)
Sarah Shreve (Iowa student rep)
Mary Ann Wynkoop (meeting facilitator)
Kathleen Wells Morgan (Executive Director)

I. Call to Order –

Meeting began at 9:11 am

II. Approval of Fall 2009 agenda

Kim made a motion to approve the Fall 2009 agenda and Laura seconded the motion. The motion passed

III. Approval of minutes from Spring 2009 meeting

Laura made the motion to approve the Spring 2009 minutes and Michael seconded.

IV. President's report

We are very pleased to have a website and thanks to Laura and Ben for getting this accomplished. The website is www.midamerica-asa.net. It has links to ASA website, H-Amstudy, and a Facebook. We can post news announcements on the website, especially our conference. We can arrange it so that people could sign up for the journal at the website.

We raised the question whether we should have a part of the website that is only for members, which might include the list of members and/or the list of subscribers to the journal.

The question was asked about the procedure for informing the webmaster about information that s/he needs to post. We discussed that the faculty rep for that institution would be the conduit for that information.

It was suggested that we have a discussion board, especially close to the conference (for “panels, roommates, and rides”). Everyone seemed to agree that would be a good idea.

We need to ask Jim Farrell to get that to take that previous MAASA website down and forward any hits to that website to the new one. Jane will contact Jim about this.

The MAASA website should include a list of graduate and undergraduate programs/departments in American Studies in the region, perhaps with links to those graduate programs. Matt will need to create the webpage and input the data, which Kim will provide the ASA list of programs. Rich will send e-mails to and/or call the department/program chairs once the information is listed on the webpage.

The website might want to add a syllabus bank from the region. There was a discussion that this should probably be password protected with the caveat that anyone could see the course-titles but people would need the password to access for the full syllabus.

The website should also include an announcement list for conferences, workshops, symposiums, etc.

V. Executive Director's report

1. Travel reimbursement for this and other meetings

Kathleen asked to submit any receipts associated with travel to this meeting. We will use the federal guidelines, 55cents/mile, for travel.

2. Updated Board Membership

President, Jane Simonsen through 2010
Vice President, unfilled for 2009-2010
Secretary, Richard Schur through 2010

Institutional Representatives

Minnesota - Roderick Ferguson
Iowa - Kim Marra
Kansas - Ben Chappell
SLU - unfilled

At-Large members

Unfilled, at large through 2012
Jane Simonsen, at large through 2012
Michael Krysko, at large through 2011
Laura Belmonte, at large through 2011
Richard Schur, at large through 2010
Unfilled, at large through 2010

Regional representative, Kim Marra through 2012

We have three open "at large" positions and all officers will be open in Spring 2010.

We will need to find a chair for the nominating committee.

We discussed about whether we really need a vice-president, especially given that we have not had one. There seemed to be a sense that we need one in order to maintain the sustainability of the organization. This "goal" however contributes to the difficulty of finding people to make the commitment. We also discussed how the officer structure ought to contribute to building the organization and recruiting new people into the organization. We talked about how the vice-president's role should be more focused on chairing the nominating committee, especially as we have more of a committee structure for organizing conferences. This might shift the conference organization duties to the president, who would be more of a committee chair for organizing the conference.

3. Financial report

Kathleen submitted her report and stated that we are still in good financial shape. She anticipates an uptick in revenues, closer to the ASA conference.

Kathleen, in her position as executive director, would like to go to the ASA this year. There is money in our accounts to support her travel and lodging. We also had previously discussed covering the travel and lodging expenses of the regional representative and the president. Ben made a motion to approve the travel and lodging expenses (with a \$40 per diem) to send the executive director, the regional representative, and the president to the 2009 ASA conference. Michael seconded the motion. The motion passed.

We discussed whether MAASA should provide support for graduate representatives for travel to the ASA. There was a lot of discussion about how best to do this and what we want to accomplish by doing this. Laura moved that when MAASA has a graduate student representative who also serves as on the ASA graduate student committee MAASA will contribute to travel costs associated with the annual meeting, determined by the executive board depending on our budget. Ben seconded. The motion passes.

4. Journal review in 2010—10 year agreement with KU ends—discuss procedures

We will need to discuss a review.

5. ASA conference request

If we wanted to do a joint conference (again) in Spring 2011, we would need to put out the call for proposals fairly soon. Jane has a copy of the previous CFP. Ideas for possible partners included Kansas State's Cultural Studies conference, National Parks sites, and other organizations.

VI. Committee reports

1. Stone-Suderman Prize

The committee (Laura Belmonte, Megan Nelson, and Bill Maxwell) is working on reading the journal's past issue. Laura has agreed to chair this committee for 2010. The prize is \$250 for the best article in *American Studies*.

2. Katzman-Yetman Prize

This is the award for the best graduate paper at our conference, which includes a preferred reading at the journal. Michael will chair the committee. A KU faculty member, persuaded by Randal and Ben, will also serve on the committee. We also recommended that a past winner can serve on the committee. Jane will send Michael a name of a past winner. We should try to get photographs.

3. Elizabeth Kolmer Award

This is an award for advising/teaching in American Studies. The call for nominations may be lost. Norm Yetman may have some of the information. Perhaps, the criteria for this award ought to align with institutional teaching and/or mentoring awards. Ann Schofield is probably the last award-winner. Kathleen will see if she can find the description and/or contact Norm. This will need to be added to the website, including a photograph. We will ask Ann to serve as the chair of this award committee.

Future agenda – to see if we want supplement this award by including ASA conference fee and if award winning essays from the regionals will be “invited” to the ASA conference.

4. Nominating Committee

There was a discussion that the chair of this committee should be on the board, but the goal of this committee ought to be to broaden the base of the board. Ben agreed to chair the committee and Randal Jelks agreed to help out with reaching out to some new people. Tom agreed to join the committee. The nominating committee will be Ben Chappell, Randal Jelks, and Tom Sarmiento. This committee will need to identify:

- Faculty representative from St. Louis University.
- Active faculty representative from Minnesota
- Need three at large positions (Erika Hannical)
- Officers for 2010-2011

VII. ASA report

We will be hosting a reception. Please encourage people to attend.

VIII. Webmaster's report

Matt Thomas submitted a report. He has asked us to look at the website and send him feedback. By the Spring meeting, we will need to determine what we will need to do to maintain continuity in this position. Deborah Whaley created a logo for MAASA. Jane moved to thank Deborah Whaley for creating a logo for MAASA. Tom seconded. The board enthusiastically approved this motion. Our website should also recognize Deborah's work.

We need to get images from our last conference on our website.

IX. *American Studies* Editors' report

Randal Jelks provided the report and has taken the position of associate editor for the journal. David Katzman is scheduled to retire in May 2010. KU has agreed to provide two more years of support to the journal. Cheryl Lester, chair of American Studies, worked very hard to secure this support. The journal is behind in publication. Randal shared the table of contents of the special issue on the Aaron Douglass exhibition. It is almost ready for the printer and the next two issues are going forward as well. Randal also provided an update about the journal's staff. The back issues of the journal are now available online, after a three year delay. Back issues are available on Project Muse and J-STOR. Sherry has taken the lead in this endeavor. Randal reported that the journal is looking toward publishing more essays aimed at the public. Kim reported that there is an Oct 16-17 conference in Iowa City with the title "Platforms of Public Scholars."

X. Conference planning

Jane passed out drafts of the next two conference proposals. There was general approval of the language. Ben recommended that we add language about the journal's preferred reading of the Yetman-Katzman award-winner's article. We discussed the idea of pushing the deadline forward for the CFP to March 1, 2010. Randal encouraged us to use the co-hosted conference to be a special issue of the journal. Jane will forward an updated draft (based on our conversation) of the CFP in the next few weeks.

A. 2010 (hire a graduate student to photograph the conference.)

Ben shared the idea of paying a graduate student (paid hourly) to aid with the logistical planning (not the program committee) associated with the conference. People mentioned that it is fairly typical to have this kind of paid position for conference logistical planning. Ben reported that the University tends to prefer hourly positions instead of an assistantship because assistantships must include tuition remission. There was a suggestion that this position might be framed as a service learning experience through the service learning center at KU. David Katzman and Randal Jelks will serve as the on-site chairs for the conference. This position would be focused on the planning end. The local advance planning will draft the position announcement.

There will be a lot of additional work onsite during the conference.

We are working with Continuing Education. Our contact is Kevin Curry.

The conference is scheduled for March 26-27 at the new conference center, The Oread, which KU is building. The rooms and food have been tentatively booked by Jane. We still need to decide if we wanted to have a lunch with the keynote.

Randal made a motion that we ask David Katzman to make the keynote presentation.

Jane explored possible topics for the conference. Deborah Whaley has already volunteered to organize a panel on Gene Wise. Another idea has been including a panel for people who have worked on the journal. Another idea could be a focus on technology and electronic publication. Additional topics/panels could focus on the value/future of American studies and whether it is a discipline at all. The graduate students should be encouraged to organize panels. (Milton will coordinate this.) We should also encourage Jazz studies because of the burgeoning interest at KU. We further discussed that we should encourage librarians and archivists to attend and present.

Related to these specific panel topics, do we want to offer invitations to speakers and/or provide honorariums to present at the conference? Randal suggested that we begin by inviting people and then determine if funding is an issue.

We discussed shifting the title to something like "Studying 'America'" This might then allow us to frame panels around things like "Queering America," "Technological America," "Gendering America" etc.

Ben, Rich, Jane, Milton, Mary Ann, and Randal are part of the planning committee. Jane will ask Deborah Whaley to join the planning committee.

Kim mentioned that John Raeburn will be retiring in Spring 2010 as well.

It will be important to get the CFP out before to the ASA conference. There was also suggestion to encourage/privilege panel presentations over paper submissions. Jane will forward a revised version of the CFP in the next few weeks.