

Mid-America American Studies Association (MAASA)

**Fall 2011 Board Meeting – Sunday, September 25, 2011
Verhaegen Hall Rm. 219, Saint Louis University, St. Louis, Mo.**

Present:

Jane Simonsen, Augustana College: president and at-large board member
Laura Belmonte, Oklahoma State University: at-large board member
Matthew Calihman, Missouri State University: at-large board member
Jeannette Jones, University of Nebraska: at-large board member
John Kinder, Oklahoma State University: at-large board member
Michael Krysko, Kansas State University: at-large board member
Ruben Flores, University of Kansas: regional graduate programs faculty rep.
Tina Parratt, University of Iowa: regional graduate programs faculty rep.
Benjamin Looker, Saint Louis University: secretary and regional graduate programs faculty rep.
Derrais Carter, University of Iowa: regional graduate programs grad-student rep.
Myrl Beam, 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)

I.) CALL TO ORDER

President Jane Simonsen called the meeting to order at 9:08am CDT and ruled that the quorum requirement had been met. After Jane thanked the members for assembling, board members introduced themselves, and Jane encouraged new members to participate freely.

II.) APPROVAL OF FALL 2011 AGENDA

Ben moved that consideration of a tribute to Mary Ann Wynkoop be added; motion seconded; APPROVED unanimously. Motion to approve amended agenda seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

III.) APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SPRING 2011 MEETING

Jane recounted the Spring 2011 meeting and the struggles to reach quorum. Jeannette noted that her name was misspelled on page 9 of the Spring 2011 minutes. Version of minutes with corrected spelling of Jeannette's name moved for approval; motion seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

Board turned to election of new officers, but after Jane recounted recent struggles in finding new leadership, she moved to alter the agenda such that the amended constitution would be considered

first, followed by a return to the officer elections immediately afterward. Motion seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

IV.) VOTE ON REVISIONS TO CONSTITUTION

Jane turned the discussion over to Laura, who, with Milton Wendland, had created the proposed revision to the constitution. For the purposes of the current constitution's Article VII, this meeting is the second board meeting at which the proposed revised constitution has been considered.

Laura discussed the proposed changes. The proposal adds a Treasurer to the officer positions. This provides more assistance with conducting MAASA finances. The proposal clarifies the committee structure, adds electronic voting, and adds a conflict of interest policy. Jane thanked Laura and Milton for their work on behalf of the board.

Ben noted that six at-large positions plus eight seats from degree-granting institutions adds up to fourteen voting members on the board, but the proposed revision caps the board membership at twelve. Laura suggested that the board have fewer than six at-large seats due to travel costs. Tina suggested that, instead, the board perhaps meet only once per year. Laura proposed more meetings, but via phone or video conferencing, plus one in-person meeting per year. This led to a general discussion on the types of business that the MAASA board must conduct each year. Laura added that the board is now more stable, meaning that it can transition from reimagining the organization to managing the organization. Laura noted that with the MAASA vice-president serving as program committee chair for the spring conference, there is less conference planning for the board as a whole to do. Jane explained that the fall meeting is often consumed largely with discussion of the next conference, and if this can be done earlier, there would be less pressing business for each fall meeting. Jeannette asked whether fall meetings could take place at the ASA national conference. Jane and Laura replied that not enough board members attend ASA, and it is especially difficult for graduate students due to financial concerns. Laura suggested distinguishing the executive board from the full board, with more of the ongoing business delegated to the former group. Jane suggested keeping board size at fourteen while considering an ASA fall board meeting or a virtual meeting for future. Ben moved to amend the proposed revised constitution, Article IV, section 1, to read "...may be as many as fourteen (14) and no fewer than..."; motion to amend was seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

Tina asked about the change to Article VI, making the vice-president the conference program chair. Laura explained that the change was a way to build the MAASA "bench." Tina asked about Article VII, section 2, on 60-day public notice of membership meetings. Laura explained that this notice is given through the MAASA website and listserv.

Ben suggested that, if the constitution revision passed, the board should clarify how the alterations to term length in the proposed revised constitution would affect term lengths of currently serving members. Jeannette asked who administered the website; Jane explained that the secretary and president correspond with the hired webmaster, Matt Thomas. Jeannette asked why Article VIII provisions for e-mail voting by the board mandated the use of the "Reply All" function; Laura explained that electronic votes are meant to be visible to all board members, much like votes at in-person meetings.

Ben moved to approve the revised constitution as amended; motion seconded and APPROVED unanimously. The revised constitution will be put before the general membership meeting for confirmation in April.

Ben moved that the board clarify that term lengths for current members are not affected by the constitutional revisions, which shorten all term lengths to two years; he noted that he would also

support a proposal to change all current term lengths, but suggested that the board clarify one way or the other. Motion seconded. Laura disagreed with the motion under consideration. Ben suggested another approach: keep term lengths the same for any board member whose term expires within the next two years, but any term extending more than two years into the future will end on June 1, 2013. Board members entered a discussion of which members' terms ended in what year. Concerns were raised that this approach would disrupt staggered end to members' terms. Ben offered to have his own term as SLU faculty representative end on June 1, 2012. Randal expressed a desire that there be more representation from liberal arts colleges, noting the importance of having representation from a diversity of institutions.

Jeannette shifted the discussion of term lengths to a consideration of the University of Minnesota faculty board seat. Ben shared his April 2011 letter, written on behalf of MAASA at the direction of the board, to chairs of the four programs/departments holding permanent board seats. The letter laid out the proposed new policy whereby non-filled seats controlled by these programs would be suspended for non-attendance at two straight board meetings. A question was raised about the disposition of such seats. The group was referred to the new constitution section which allows the board to leave suspended seats unfilled or to reallocate them to at-large seats. Jane noted the importance of Minnesota graduate representatives to MAASA in the past; Myrl informed the board that Minnesota faculty did not seem interested in filling their allotted board seat. Ruben noted the importance of having representation from a strong program such as Minnesota, especially in our negotiations with the national ASA over resource allocation. Myrl offered to meet with Minnesota faculty if the board wished; Jane asked that Myrl do so, and that Myrl reply to the board by December. Myrl asked whether potential Minnesota faculty representatives could be affiliated American Studies faculty and not core faculty. Jane replied that someone with enough contact with American Studies to represent the program would be acceptable. Myrl agreed to have such conversations and to report back in December.

The conversation returned to current term lengths. Ben moved that the board determine that all board-member terms ending on June 1, 2013, or before will remain unaffected by the new constitution, and that terms lengths now extending beyond this date will end on June 1, 2013, with the exception of his own term, which will now be scheduled to end on June 1, 2012 (rather than the current end date of June 1, 2014). Motion was seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

Avery asked that the board adopt a mechanism for determining who is a MAASA member and eligible to vote in full membership meetings before the Tulsa membership meeting in April 2012 takes place.

V.) ELECTION OF NEW OFFICERS

Jane recounted who is currently serving in officer positions. She began the process of board elections for officer positions going forward.

John nominated Ben for president. Ben respectfully declined. Ben nominated Michael for president; John seconded. Michael accepted the nomination, and gave a speech offering to do his best to carry on the work that Jane has done so well. Jane asked for any further nominations, of which there was none. The board unanimously APPROVED Michael as the next MAASA president and the twenty-second 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 broke into applause.

Jane opened nominations for vice-president. Michael nominated John; Jane seconded. John accepted the nomination. Jane called for other nominations, of which there was none. The board unanimously APPROVED John as vice-president.

Jane opened nominations for the new position of treasurer, and noted that this position's existence will be affirmed by the general membership meeting as part of the constitutional approval vote in April 2012. Jeannette nominated Ruben. A discussion of the duties of the treasurer ensued. Ruben declined the nomination but offered to fill this role starting next year if the board wishes. Laura nominated herself for treasurer; Jeannette seconded. The board unanimously APPROVED Laura as treasurer.

Jane opened nominations for secretary. Ben offered gladly to step aside for anyone who would be willing to full the role. No one offered to fill the role. Ben was nominated as secretary; nomination seconded. Ben accepted the nomination. The board unanimously APPROVED Ben as secretary.

Jane opened nominations for ASA Regional Chapters Committee Representative. Jane explained the position. John suggested electing a graduate student as a way to help with underfunded graduate-student travel budgets. John noted, however, that there may be reasons to prefer the stability of a long-serving faculty member in this role. Laura noted that this may be an awkward position in which to place a graduate student; it is difficult to ask a graduate student to argue to the national ASA that the national association does not pay enough attention to its regional associations. Jane noted that this is a three-year term; that length is set by the ASA—although the board can certainly replace a representative mid-term if necessary. Jane explained that most other regionals are represented by their presidents or vice-presidents. Jane noted recent successes in convincing the ASA to fund travel by the graduate-student authors of the regional associations' prize-winning conference papers to the national ASA to deliver said papers. The board considered whether anyone was going to the ASA this year. Randal offered to attend the ASA regional chapters meeting on behalf of MAASA. Ruben offered to fill the three-year term of this position but noted that he cannot attend the ASA conference this fall.

Randal asked what issues this representative is asked to deal with. Jane explained the kinds of exchange of information and successful practices that take place at the regional chapters meeting. Laura emphasized the importance of this kind of dialogue in the current economic downturn, which is making regional conferences difficult to sustain. The conversation moved toward MAASA finances, MAASA conference attendance, and the Spring 2011 board policy that future MAASA conferences must break even.

Ben nominated Ruben for the position of ASA Regional Chapters Committee Representative, with the proviso that Randal would fill in for him this year, and Ruben would serve in this position through the 2013 ASA conference. The nomination was seconded and APPROVED unanimously. Jane agreed to convey this decision to the proper parties at the ASA, and to get Ruben and Randal onto the appropriate email list.

VI.) PROPOSED "RESOLUTION ON LABOR AND MAASA MEETINGS"

Ben explained the origins of this proposed resolution. It was a companion resolution proposal to the MAASA Resolution on Labor Rights in a Time of Crisis, which was adopted by the board and the general membership meeting in April 2011. The current resolution before the board was not passed in April 2011; the board deemed the issues too complex to address at that time, and deferred discussion to the Fall 2011 board meeting. Ben noted that the idea for this resolution came from Sherrie Tucker, and added that he did not have enough knowledge fully to convey Sherrie's positions on the matter. Laura opposed the resolution, arguing that professional organizations ought not to engage in activist politics. Laura also advised that the resolution could result in catastrophic financial loss to MAASA. Tina asked whether the proposed resolution's requirement of an escape clause from hotel contracts in the case of labor strikes didn't actually

insulate MAASA from such financial loss. Laura suggested no hotel would agree to such a clause. Jeannette and Laura noted the difficulty in a policy of union preference in hotel selection when conferences are in so-called “right-to-work” states.

Ben asked whether the discussion could take place at the Spring 2012 board meeting, because Sherrie would potentially be there to convey her reasons for advocating such a resolution. Jeannette suggested voting on the proposed resolution at the current meeting; she expressed support, but felt that MAASA would seldom be able to adhere to the policy. John asked what the word “attempt” might mean in practice, in the phrase stating that MAASA would “attempt to select a union hotel and/or service providers if any such provider(s) respond(s) to a request for proposals...” Avery offered an amendment adding the phrase “where feasible in the selected conference city.” Avery explained that Sherrie had not wanted to see MAASA locked into a conference using a hotel where MAASA attendees would be asked to cross picket lines, and noted that Sherrie was quite aware of the existence of so-called “right-to-work” states. Myrl asked whether an additional clause ought to be added with regard to associated conference services, for instance guiding MAASA away from placing orders through food retailers engaged in aggressive union-busting. Laura suggested that a policy of this nature would lead the organization next to resolve to avoid states with anti-immigrant legislation or anti-GLBT legislation; she noted that MAASA conferences need to take place in such states to provide an alternative voice.

Tina noted that this issue will continue to come up and ought to be figured out in the near future; she suggested that MAASA simply needed to figure out wording that put shared sentiments into pragmatic, real-world applications. Randal commented that MAASA should issue a public statement about labor and working-people’s rights when the association is meeting in a place with anti-labor policies; he continued that while writing and speaking may not seem like an action, it is, and sometimes it is the only action that can be taken. Randal noted that, during his time at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., approximately one-third of the faculty signed a public letter opposing President George W. Bush’s visit to the campus, and this elicited a good deal of media coverage. Laura suggested making the proposal into a board policy rather than a binding MAASA resolution. Myrl supported the concept of turning the proposal into a framing document for the board’s values, rather than a strict policy, and suggested that it be a document taken into consideration when planning conferences.

Jane and Ben suggested a subcommittee to consider language and applications, rather than the board working through language revisions at the board meeting; Jane proposed that a subcommittee be asked to report back with a proposal a month before the April 2012 board meeting. Matt and Avery volunteered for the subcommittee; Avery will ask Sherrie to join. Ben offered a motion charging said subcommittee with preparing a proposal by one month before the April board meeting. Motion seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

VII.) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Jane noted that the report was to be given in absentia, as Kathleen was not present. Jane recounted for the board Kathleen’s responsibilities and length of service as Executive Director, extending back to 1984. Kathleen’s financial report was available in hard copy for the board members. Jane noted the downturn in MAASA finances since the recession. Jane directed Treasurer Laura Belmonte to contact Kathleen regarding finances.

Jane sent around a sign-up sheet for board members to write their travel reimbursement claims. Ben requested that the reimbursement policy be put on the web, because it is complex and is only known to board members via bits and pieces of the policy noted in various past meeting minutes. Jane agreed to assemble the current policy, put it in writing, give a copy to the nominating

committee, and give a copy to Matt Thomas to place on the web. The board may revise this at the Spring 2012 meeting if it wishes.

Jeannette asked whether the board agenda may be given to outside parties, as proof of attendance, in order to obtain reimbursement from employers. Jane and Laura noted that minutes, agendas, and other meeting documents are public and may be shared, unless such documents are records of the board meeting in executive session.

Ben moved to accept Kathleen's financial report; the motion was seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

VIII.) AMERICAN STUDIES JOURNAL EDITORS' REPORT

Randal began by noting that a review is still being planned, and is overdue. Randal noted the reasons why *American Studies* is behind in issues; noted that the journal is catching up. Randal explained that sequential numbering and dating is necessary to obtain postal discount. Randal praised the work of Avery Dame and Justine Greve, graduate assistants to the journal. Randal announced that volume 51, issues 1-2 (Spring/Summer 2010) are going to the printer next week. Randal explained that Ruben and Ben Chappell are building a review committee, using the template and procedures from the last review for the current committee. Jane asked about the target date for the review. The journal, Randal said, is aiming to have the final evaluation report for the board before the Spring 2012 meeting; target date for evaluators to visit U-Kansas campus is February 2012.

Randal reiterated that necessary information is known only to David Katzman, retired editor, and still must be retrieved from him and put into writing. Laura urged current editors to write down important information so this situation does not occur in future editorial transitions. Randal agreed to put journal review online as a PDF for future review committees to access. Randal announced that editors are discussing how to move to online-only publishing, with print-on-demand available for interested purchasers. Randal explained that the journal is considering outsourcing copyediting to a university publisher or to Allen Press, the current printer, in order to expedite publishing process. Avery agreed to update journal email list to include all current board members. Randal emphasized that *American Studies* is the journal of MAASA, and board members ought to make use of it and promote it. Randal explained the functions of the editorial board.

Randal asked for approval for four new editorial board members, and passed around CV's for each. The nominees were Crystal S. Anderson (English Department, Elon University); Udo J. Hebel (American Studies, University of Regensburg, Germany); Elizabeth VanArragon (Department of Art and Art History, Calvin College); and Deborah Elizabeth Whaley (Department of American Studies and Program in African American Studies, University of Iowa). Some members, Randal announced, would soon be leaving the editorial board. Randal is looking for additional editorial board members with expertise in religion and American culture. Matt and Jeannette offered suggestions to Avery about potential candidates; these included Jeannette's suggestions of Kirsten Fischer (History, University of Michigan) and Anthony Santoro (Heidelberg Center for American Studies). Laura asked about guaranteed journal publication for the Katzman-Yetman Prize winner; Randal noted that this would be the policy.

Jeannette offered a motion to approve the four new editorial board nominees; Ruben seconded; the motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Randal offered a final remark, asking for board members who know of online journals with good web templates to send them to him. Randal noted the presence of all *American Studies* article

back to 1960 online for free. Randal explained that the journal is mulling whether to make an online version open- or closed-access. Randal committed to working on a better interface with the MAASA website. Randal recounted his and Sherrie's dedication to the journal, and noted that more of his efforts could move in this direction with the arrival of a new full professor in his U-Kansas department. Randal announced plans for a special issue on funk. Matt asked about the *American Studies* acceptance rate; Randal put this at 2 or 3 articles per every 10 submissions, along with some revise-and-resubmit publications.

IX.) PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Jane noted that she would set up the MAASA reception at the ASA conference. Jane explained plans to dispense with the expense of food and only offer an open bar. Jane informed the board of prices for an open bar: \$175 bartender fee, minimum of \$500 for alcohol bill; beers at \$6 and up; wine at \$9 and up. Laura suggested using a bar near the hotel instead, to save on bartender costs. Jane noted the difficulties in getting the word out about such an off-site event, and pondered the difficulties this might pose for Michael, as president, in determining who was a MAASA member and hence could partake for free. Jeannette suggested a list and wrist-bands for MAASA members, and advised that each MAASA member only receive one drink for free. Ben suggested that a school ID from any institution in the eleven-state MAASA region could suffice, since almost everyone at the ASA conference would be an ASA member, and hence (if they were from MAASA's region) automatically a MAASA member.

Board members considered budget for the past few years of the ASA reception, and most felt that the costs for the coming year might be too high. Laura suggested that such an event, if not in the ASA official program, would be problematic. Jane noted that an email list could be assembled and used for an announcement. Myrl noted that the main problem would simply be finding a bar that would work with us. Michael agreed to research and select such a bar. Randal spoke of the difficulties in assembling an updated email list of the membership. Ben suggested that a MAASA list could be created by combining two lists: the ASA list of ASA members in the MAASA region, which was given recently to Jane; and the *American Studies* list of people who had joined MAASA and subscribed to the journal independently of any ASA membership. Such a list could be handed to Matt Thomas, who could send an email to the entire list. Jane asked whether Michael would put the bar tab on his credit card and be reimbursed later by MAASA; Michael agreed to this. Michael was charged with finding a bar, making arrangements, and working with Jane, Randal, and Matt Thomas to get an email to the membership regarding the reception.

Lunch arrived (Nora's in Dogtown deli) and the group took a short break.

X.) REPORT FROM WEBMASTER

Upon resumption of the meeting, Michael summarized the webmaster's report, sent by Matt Thomas and distributed to board members.

The board worked to answer the questions that Matt Thomas had asked in his report. Matt Thomas asked what address to use as MAASA's physical mailing address for web applications that require this information. Currently, he is using Kathleen's home address. The board determined that Matt Thomas should use the mailing address for the *American Studies* journal.

Randal noted that he wanted an option for joining MAASA (and, hence, subscribing to *American Studies*) added to the "Membership" page of the MAASA website; this can be done through the journal's new PayPal account. Currently, one must download a PDF application form and mail it in with a check.

Randal expressed a desire for the website to make joining and subscribing easier for web visitors.

Ruben argued that the organization needs to develop a stronger brand. Ben recounted some of MAASA's long history and suggested that this could be written up and put on the website.

The board discussed the relationship between ASA membership and MAASA membership. Anyone from MAASA's eleven states who joins the ASA is automatically a MAASA member; some also join MAASA independently, and also thereby subscribe to the journal. Matt wondered if the board can alert ASA members in the MAASA region that they are, in fact, MAASA members. Ben suggested sending an email to the entire membership list—Jane's list of ASA members in the region plus the journal's list of independent MAASA members—once we have the Tulsa call for papers and the information for the ASA reception. This email will welcome recipients to MAASA, inform them that they are MAASA members, promote the Spring 2012 conference, and alert recipients to the Baltimore ASA reception. Michael agreed to work with Jane's list, the journal's list, and Matt Thomas's email account for MAASA to develop and send such an email to the full membership.

Ruben volunteered to obtain missing photographs of people for whom MAASA awards are named, and to convey these to Matt Thomas for the website. Randal expressed a desire for three-minute videos of panel discussions, speeches, addresses, and other MAASA-related academic events.

Matt Thomas's report asks who ought to be his contact going forward, now that Jane is no longer president. The board determined that his contacts would be the president and the secretary, as before, with Michael filling the former role.

Ben asked whether the board, which owns the copyright to *American Studies*, the *Midcontinent American Studies Journal*, and the *Journal of the Central Mississippi Valley American Studies Association*, had any objections to mounting past CMVASA and Midcontinent ASA newsletters (1960-83) on the MAASA website. Group approved of such action.

Board determined that Mary Ann Wynkoop would be asked whether she would be willing to write a history of MAASA for the website. This document would be passed to David Katzman and Elizabeth Kolmer for additions.

The board commended and approved Matt Thomas's efforts to link MAASA's Facebook page with its Twitter account.

XI. STAFFING COMMITTEES

Michael turned the board's conversation toward the staffing of committees. Ben asked whether graduate-student representatives are eligible for all these committees; Jane and Michael answered that they are.

The board considered the committee for the Stone-Suderman Award for best article in *American Studies*. The last award given was for volume 48. Volumes 49 and 50 are now complete. The award committee will give prizes for both volumes. Jeannette volunteered; Myrl volunteered. Randal agreed to obtain a third committee member from the *American Studies* editorial board. Jeannette agreed to chair the committee. Laura agreed to share a scoring template used by a past version of this committee. A motion was made to appoint Jeannette, Myrl, and a journal editorial board member named by Randal to the committee, and to charge them to convey to the board the

names of winners for volume 49 and volume 50 by March 2012; motion was seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

The board considered the committee for the Katzman-Yetman Award for best graduate-student conference paper delivered at the annual MAASA conference. Jane noted that usually someone from the host institution, someone from the board, and an outside reader served on the committee. John agreed to obtain a committee member from Oklahoma State or to fill this role himself. Derrais agreed to serve. Matt agreed to serve. Michael offered to pass along to John a past call for nominations, for John's use in developing the new call for nominations. Ben asked John to include details on the prize procedures in the conference call for papers, and John agreed. Matt agreed to be chair of this committee. A motion was made to appoint Derrais, Matt, and an Oklahoma State member secured by John to the award committee; motion was seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

The board considered the committee for the Elizabeth Kolmer Award for service in mentoring and service to MAASA. Jane noted that the award committee is usually chaired by the most recent winner, and she volunteered to contact 2011 award-winner Marguerite Shaffer of Miami University of Ohio to solicit her service. The board considered whether the award in future ought to be limited to nominees in the MAASA region, or even to MAASA members more specifically. Ben noted that service to MAASA is one award criterion. Jane said that the criteria needed to be clarified before issuing the call for nominations. Jeannette suggested that the criterion of service to MAASA ought to be eliminated if it meant that board members would simply be giving one another awards. Ben asked whether explicitly excluding current board members from consideration would allay Jeannette's concern; Jeannette replied that it would. Jane opined that nominees ought to be MAASA members. Ben opined that service to MAASA ought to be retained as one award criterion, but suggested that people with a background in the MAASA region or in MAASA affairs should be eligible even if they had since left the region. Jane agreed and noted that she would work on language for this in the call for nominations. Ben made a motion to appoint Jane and Marguerite Shaffer to the award committee; the motion was seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

The board considered the Nominating Committee. It was suggested that the board should not be asking people to serve on the board, then having these people run in contested elections, potentially to lose. It would reflect poorly on the board to ask people to volunteer their time and then to have those people's offers of service rejected. Ben asked whether the board needed nominees right now, advising that if it did not, the Nominating Committee could be left dormant until such time as seats became vacant. Jane and Michael noted that their at-large terms expire in one year. Ben asked whether they wished to stay on the board after that time, wondering why the board would want to recruit people to run against Jane and Michael. Jane asked for time to consider whether to continue her service past Summer 2012. Michael informed the board that he would like to continue with another term after his term expires in Summer 2012. Jane asked whether Laura wanted to continue after the Summer 2012 expiration of her term; Laura answered that she did not. The Nominating Committee, therefore, needs to find one additional person to run for an at-large seat. Ben asked about Milton Wendland's interest in filling this seat. Two board members noted that Milton may not remain in the region beyond this academic year. Jeannette expressed a desire for a person not from a research university to fill Laura's seat. The board agreed to leave the Nominating Committee dormant until the Spring 2012 meeting, when these issues would be revisited.

Randal left the board meeting at 12:51pm CDT.

XII.) UPCOMING CONFERENCES

The board discussed the Spring 2012 conference scheduled for Tulsa. The board viewed the draft call for papers circulated by John. The document's genesis was explained by John, who referred back to a Spring 2011 board conversation about the possibility of emphasizing what made MAASA and its region distinctive. John aimed for a conference that is open enough for anyone working in a region to participate, but still defined enough that it had a guiding set of questions or purpose.

Matt asked whether the conference call for papers would permit ideas about Mid-America or Middle America that weren't identified regionally with Middle America. John answered yes. Tina noted the uses of the terms "Middle England" and "Little Englander" in the United Kingdom, and asked whether similar valences were intended with the term Middle America. Laura answered yes, and explained that the term transcends regional boundaries. Myrl urged the board to think about the racial implications of the term "Middle America," and wondered whether the call for papers should reference this explicitly. Jeannette noted that immigration ought to play a role. Laura discussed the organizers' wish to see undergraduate participation, and invited undergraduate participation from other institutions in the region. Myrl noted the importance of rural spaces and identities in recent queer studies work; Myrl noted that identities and forms of area studies are not named in this draft call for papers.

Laura expressed openness to including such language, noting that a passage on Mid-America identities and how they are constructed could be added. John agreed that such a passage would work well, but also explained that the organizers did not want a four-page list of concepts and topics, but instead were striving for broad guideposts around which people could formulate an endless variety of proposals. John noted the organizers' desire to elicit participation from people working in a broad variety of disciplines. John and Laura expressed interest in having a number of roundtables on professional issues and challenges. Ben asked when the dates would be set; Laura and John replied that they would check with OSU-Tulsa personnel and choose these soon.

John asked if anything else needed to be included in the call for papers. Ben asked for notice of the MAASA membership meeting to be included, so that the board would not risk violating the new constitutional requirement that "[m]embers must be given public notice of scheduled meetings at least 60 days prior to the meeting." John agreed to add such an announcement. Tina asked whether conference participants must be MAASA members; Jane said no. Discussion ensued about whether this ought to be included on the call for papers.

The board moved to consideration of the 2013, 2014, and 2015 conferences. Ben announced that a visual culture group at SLU, with which he is not affiliated, is considering bidding for a joint conference with MAASA in 2013. Jane noted that joint conferences, which MAASA has held every other year, lose money for the organization because MAASA gives funds to the organizers. Ben remembered that the Wisconsin organizers of the 2011 conference had been optimistic that they could return part of the \$5,000 of MAASA funds granted to them, based on conference receipts. Michael agreed to check with Kathleen about whether MAASA had any of these funds returned to it.

Avery asked whether a conference is needed every year. Board discussed the role the conference plays, and it was noted that the ASA has not held a conference in the Midwest since 1997. Jane expressed interest in hosting the MAASA conference at Augustana College in 2014. Laura left the meeting at 1:14pm CDT.

Ben suggested that the board put out a request for bids for a 2013 joint conference, noting how much MAASA was willing to contribute, even if that amount was zero dollars. Jeannette asked why a specific number should be announced, and suggested that bids be judged by their budgets

and how those proposed conference budgets would affect MAASA's finances. Derrais suggested that the request for bids include information on the other kinds of support MAASA can provide, such as a built-in group of potential attendees, publicity via its website and email list, and so forth, along with the one member of the conference organizing committee that MAASA traditionally contributes when hosting joint conferences. Ben suggested that the request for bids—retitled an “Invitation for Collaboration” at the suggestion of Jane—could note that MAASA *may* be able to contribute toward incidental expenses, with the board then judging such proposals based on which has the most realistic financial plan. Ben was asked to write such an invitation for collaboration, share with the board, and distribute via various MAASA channels, with the board then considering any resulting proposals at the Spring 2012 board meeting. Ben again noted that a group from SLU, of which he is not a member, might bid; he said that if the board did not see a conflict of interest there, he would take on this task. The board saw no conflict of interest.

The board decided not to consider the 2015 conference, as the board composition may have changed greatly by that date, and it made no sense to bind the hands of future boards.

XIII.) NEW BUSINESS

Jane raised the matter of a tribute to Mary Ann Wynkoop, a past president of MAASA who generously served the board for many years by organizing the annual fall board meeting at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Jane suggested that the board consider giving engraved wine glasses or an engraved decanter to Mary Ann, and volunteered to have such an item ordered and delivered. A motion was made to approve an expenditure by Jane of up to \$100 for such a purpose; the motion was seconded and APPROVED unanimously.

Michael asked whether there was any new business; no new business was raised.

XIV.) FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Michael moved to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded and APPROVED unanimously. The meeting ended at 1:28pm CDT.