

# ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE LIBERAL STUDIES PROGRAMS

## Spring Board Meeting Vancouver, BC

April 24 and 25, 2008

### Minutes

Meeting called to order by Linda Paulson, president, at 3:00 pm, April 24, 2008.

Present: Linda Paulson, president; James Pappas, vice president; Mary Rockcastle, secretary/treasurer; board members Debrah Bokowski, Steve Duguid, Kathleen Forbes, Kristine Rabberman, Bob Smither; *ex officio* members Jerry Jerman and Ken Smith; national office administrative manager Ellen Levine. Board member David Arant was not in attendance.

1. Agenda was presented and approved.
2. Fall 2007 board meeting minutes  
Kris Rabberman noted that she is no longer on the awards committee, but is chair of the membership committee. The minutes were approved as amended.
3. Treasurer's Report  
Mary Rockcastle reported the 2007 conference financial results and the 2007 association budget and financial results. She also reviewed the 2008 budget
4. Membership Committee Report  
Kris reviewed the state of membership in 2007.
  - a. Dues payment  
She noted that upon the end of June dues deadline, she will personally contact those members that have not paid.
  - b. New members/applications to full member  
St. Mary's (Halifax) has indicated an interest in becoming an associate member. University of St. Thomas has expressed interest in moving up to full member status. Hiram expressed interest at the fall business meeting. Kris will follow up. She noted that the board needs to think about how to encourage associate members to move up to full member status, and that we need to articulate the value of full membership and communicate that in our promotional material, Web site, and publications. Certain services/programs could be accessible only to full members, e.g., certain publications, regional student symposia participation with associate members gaining access for a fee. On the other hand, some resources (e.g., publication) might be of greater value to associate members. Perhaps a mentoring program for new/associate members. Kris agreed to reach out to a sample of associate programs to determine what services they are looking for.
  - c. Outreach

To reach the GLS programs that are not members, she suggested a brochure for nonmembers that articulates the benefits of the AGLSP.

d. Value of membership

Board members agreed that we need to articulate the value of associate and full memberships. Do we need to rebrand ourselves? This may relate to all of the associations material, including web site.

e. Membership categories

- Jim suggested we have an individual category – professional or affiliated scholar, to provide a membership for scholars to affiliate with the association, even if their institution does not. This could also be a category for alumni.
- A student membership was raised, with the question of what that would mean. Perhaps the exiting association of institutions is the best way to serve students, that by advocating for programs, we advocate for students.
- Categories are a constitutional issue, and will be addressed in the constitution revision discussion.

5. 2008 Conference

a. Program

Steve distributed and reviewed the draft program. He will rework the schedule to place the business meeting earlier in the day on Saturday.

b. Linda raised the prospect of compiling syllabi and providing to conference participants.

- Course descriptions and syllabi for the following categories
  - core courses
  - core sequences
  - capstone courses
  - interdisciplinary writing courses
  - comparative cultures courses
  - conference theme courses (environmental issues)
- Provide on a CD to conference participants
- Mary suggested a pedagogy session at the conference, with the presented papers collected into a monograph and published by the association; would provide a publishing credit to contributors. Linda suggested this pedagogy session at the workshop, and presented by members; material will need to be solicited now. Steve will identify pedagogy presentations already selected and label them so attendees can easily find.

c. Conference registration fees

- Increased fees for the extended conference were discussed and approved:
  - Workshop only       \$160
    - *second and subsequent: \$110*
  - Conference only     \$360
    - *second: \$310*
    - *third and subsequent: \$260*
  - Full conference       \$440
    - *second: \$360*
    - *third and subsequent: \$310*
  - Student w/meals     \$125

- Student w/o meals \$45

Ellen will research discount incidence at past conferences.

d. Conference theme

- Steve advised that, to conform to the “green” theme, he will try to meet the 100-mile, local food standard and make other attempts to make this conference environmentally responsible.
  - It was suggested that we give away AGLSP mugs, for attendees to use at the conference; Steve will look into this.
  - He will also provide the algorithm for attendees to compute their carbon footprints.
  - Steve will provide “green” language to Ellen for promotional and web purposes.

6. 2009 Conference

Bob Smither reported that Rollins will host the 2009 conference in Orlando.

a. Hotel

He can get a room rate of \$159 at the Coronado Springs Hotel, a Disney resort, during the Nov. 4-11 period. That rate includes airport transportation and transportation to other parks. He will continue to investigate other possibilities.

b. Theme

Theme has not been determined and Bob appealed to the board for suggestions. Florida-related ideas include environment, diversity, Latin America, immigration, popular culture, creativity and imagination, the future. Board members will be in contact with Bob on the theme, which will be finalized at the summer board meeting.

7. Publications Committee

a. *Confluence*

- Jerry Jerman (managing editor) distributed a copy of the half-page cooperative ad that runs in *World Literature Today*.
- He expects to have the spring issue out by the end of May. He reported that the unit cost has dropped from \$10.27 to \$8.33.
- He has begun a relationship with EBSCO, such that they will bundle *Confluence* with other products they promote and make available electronically (PDFs that EBSCO will produce by scanning). There is no cost the AGLSP and expands the reach.
- Ken Smith (editor) reported that we can produce searchable archives if we want to spend money, but that if EBSCO will produce PDFs at no cost to us, we should go with the PDFs.
- Ken raised the question as to whether we should post issues on the web site. He and Jerry have drafted a new author agreement that allows us to republish.
- Ken reported that editorially, the current issue has been interesting, enjoyable, and more time-consuming than he had anticipated in that submissions required heavy editing. He noted that the submissions still are too long, and he is working toward shorter and greater variety/diversity in terms of subject, voice, institution. For the spring 2008 issue, he reported a good response to an appeal he had sent to members who had not had a student published in many years.

- Mary suggested bringing the subject of the essay into the conference every year, in a pedagogy session, to address the debate between the very academic and those that have form, style, and voice.
- Sponsorships continue to be an important source of financial support for the journal. In 2007 we had 18 sponsors, falling short of our goal. This year a notice went out in March to programs that had not sponsored in the past, to prime their interest, ask them to include a sponsorship in their budgets. The solicitation to all members will go out in June (end of July deadline is required to meet the fall publishing deadline, so sponsorships can be acknowledged). A multi-year option was raised, without resolution.
- Mary suggested we offer a discount for 10+ and 20+ copies, for class sets. Jerry will determine these discounted prices.

The meeting recessed at 5:15 pm, to reconvene April 26.

Linda reconvened the meeting at 9:30 am on Saturday, April 26.

- a. Continuation of the *Confluence* discussion:
  - Mary discussed the prospect of a competition to stimulate more and better submissions, that it is meant to motivate programs to encourage students to submit and to vet those submissions to ensure quality. She solicited board input re: frequency, competition name, type (interdisciplinary or critical essay), who would be eligible, nature (cash or publishing opportunity or both), who to judge, structure of winning (winner, honorable mention, etc.).
    - Jim suggested the idea of a tuition scholarship (from the winner's institution)
    - Mary noted the value to both the student and the program – a win noted on both records
    - Type: Steve noted that the word interdisciplinary continues to be problematic. Were we to solicit submissions on a specific interdisciplinary topic, we could encourage the interdisciplinary treatment.
    - Name: we could honor someone (e.g., O'Callahan, Levis), or find a wealthy alum to sponsor or underwrite
    - Mary will prepare a competition proposal to the board for the summer meeting, to be introduced to the membership at the fall conference.
    - Promotion: Jim suggested we prepare an electronic promotional piece (pdf) for programs to email to their students; could feature students who have published in *Confluence*.
    - Ken is planning on hiring some part-time graduate students to interview each author and publish those interviews on the web.
- b. Other publications
  - Syllabus compilations. Linda will send an email to the membership soliciting syllabi/curriculum interest. For the summer board meeting, Mary will try to compile syllabi in the following categories:
    - core courses
    - core sequences
    - interdisciplinary essay

- interdisciplinary courses
- conference theme courses

Jim suggested at affinity table at a conference breakfast for those interested in discussing syllabi.

- Integrating Knowledge and Action update – turn into a Director’s Handbook, with best practices
  - Jim noted the value of a Director’s Handbook for which there is widespread interest. He suggested picking programs with particular strengths and having those directors write those sections; that past board members might be ready contributors. Linda suggested that Kathleen could take responsibility for the online section. This could also be valuable for new programs/directors to show their provosts. It should be available in both hard copy and electronic.
  - Mary suggested contacting Rich Guzman (original author) to discuss the best way to update this publication.
  - Kris hopes to have the survey out in June and will provide those data for the handbook.
  - Mary will provide a plan (outline/assignments/deliverables/deadlines) at the summer board meeting.

8. Awards Committee (Debrah Bokowski)

Ellen sent out the National Faculty Award solicitation to full members on April 18. The deadline is the end of June.

9. Member Survey (Kris Rabberman)

Kris has been working with Melissa Hilbish to field the member survey. They have decided to divide the survey into six sections (attachment), to go out every three months, with the objective of cycling through the sections on a regular basis. She hopes to have the first section out in June, so we can present the results at the conference.

- Linda to send an email to the membership in May to announce the upcoming survey and generate interest
- The survey will be fielded using *Survey Monkey*, a software service that is being donated to the AGLSP by the University of Pennsylvania and Johns Hopkins.
- For the summer board meeting, need to decide how to present at the conference and set up a schedule for rolling out the remaining sections.

10. Constitution (Debrah)

The board reviewed the current constitution in detail. Debrah will prepare a draft for the summer board meeting, rewriting in narrative format. It was noted that the constitution as it stands is suited to a new organization, but is inappropriate to an established organization. A few general comments: consistent narrative format; focus on what the AGLSP is (as opposed to what we are not); needn’t be an operations document, reduce the specificity; include a brief history in a prelude; revisit membership categories. Ellen will provide a brief piece on the National Office.

Board discussed the requirements for changing the constitution, what constitutes a quorum, and how best to track full members at the business meeting and ensure only full members

vote and that each full member is casting only one vote. It was suggested that full members be issued a single card with which they vote.

Ellen will research the process of past constitutional changes and full membership participation at past conferences and business meetings.

#### 11. Accreditation (Jim Pappas)

Jim reported on his research in specialized accreditation (attachments). He reviewed what it is, what it entails, and the key issues for the AGLSP: (a) initially, to become established as a specialized accrediting body, the organization will need to go through the process itself; (b) ongoing it will require considerable association resources. In discussing what it adds to the organization and membership, Jim suggested we reassess to do more with full member reviews and site visits.

- It was noted that David Gitomer and Dave Rankin have done many program reviews and could be asked to write up a summary of their process.
- Kathleen noted that she had done a review of ETSU and will provide that report.

#### 12. Web site review (Kathleen)

The web site was discussed in terms of its functionality and branding. It was noted that revision requires two stages – design and technical. The best approach might be to have the site assessed to determine what needs to be done. Linda, Mary, and Jerry offered to have their contacts review and assess the site, for the development of a proposal for the 2009 budget year. Functional requirements drafted by Ellen are attached.

#### 13. Membership revisited

Based on the constitution discussion, the board discussed the benefits of membership, for which category.

#### 14. New Business

- a. Linda reported on her upcoming regional student and alumni symposium, to take place in June with Stanford, Marylhurst, Simon Fraser, San Diego State, Reed, Dominican, and Maastricht. Students and alumni will be presenting a total of 55 papers. Linda will send invitations to Ellen to circulate to the board.

#### 15. Workshop

- Debrah suggested that we offer an interactive session in the afternoon, to engage participants, so as not to lose their interest.
  - Linda offered the topic suggested by David Gitomer: the issue of GLS students not being prepared for courses in other parts of the university; how best to prepare/position students to overcome the perception that GLS students don't have the research background and rigor for these courses. It was noted that not all programs have encountered this problem.
- a. Afternoon Symposium
    - Graduate-level writing and research was raised as a general issue confronting most programs: what is the standard, what are the expectations, how to get faculty engaged in writing.

- It was decided that the afternoon symposium will address WRITING, and that participants will be asked to bring examples of assignments, syllabi, course concepts, style issues, research methods, faculty engagement. It was suggested that Simon Fraser have some students talk about their writing experience. Linda will contact the membership for what writing issues they are most interested in exploring and solicit participation.
- b. Morning Nuts and Bolts
- Linda will email the membership for specifics to address and elicit interest/participation on the following topics (i.e., what of these are you interested in; what would you be interested in participating in; what other issues)
- Mary:
    - Admissions (how to evaluate good candidates, process/enrollment management; converting inquiry to enrollment)
    - Administration – how to deal with the politics, how to advocate for the program, how to build budgets
  - [need leader]
    - Curriculum issues – core sequences, what make for a good course, how to build a core curriculum
    - Faculty recruitment
  - David Gitomer (Linda to contact him)
    - Preparing student for courses outside of the GLS curriculum
- c. Details of the workshop will be worked out at the summer board meeting.

#### 16. Summer board meeting

Ellen distributed the hotel reservation instructions for the summer board meeting. Kathleen had suggested that we invite all local member program directors to the summer board dinner. Ellen will follow up.

Linda adjourned the meeting at 3:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Ellen Levine  
 Administrative Manager  
 May 6, 2008