

AAR/WR Board Meeting
13 March 2010
Arizona State University, Tempe

Present: Arisika Razak, Presiding; Souad Ali, Doe Daughtry, Susan Maloney, Rebecca Moore, Norris Palmer, Emily Silverman, Jason Smick. Kahenna Viale, Dirk von der Horst; Observer, Theresa Yugar

1. Student Paper Competition. The group agreed that if a student paper was accepted by a panel, and the student submitted the paper for the award, but the panel was cancelled, the student paper should still be eligible for consideration for the award. Palmer reminded the group that if an applicant is affiliated with an institution, they are a student; if they are not affiliated with an institution, they are an independent scholar.

2. Regionally Elected Director (RED) Report. Maloney said that nationally many important things are happening. First, overtures are being made from AAR to SBL; it will not be the same, but there will be more collaboration than currently. Second, the Board passed a resolution to restructure the national Board, and appointed a task force to develop a plan. It is currently undemocratically structured. Once the plan is presented to national, it will go to all AAR members. The plan will reduce the number of members of the Board. Part of the problem is the cost of flying 35 members to various Board meetings. The student group and the Women's Caucus have been eliminated at the national level.

Out of 10 regions, 4 regions have nonprofit commissions (e.g., WECSOR). Compared to other regions, AAR/WR is a huge success. National AAR wants to bring about uniformity at regional level, and initially planned to appoint a task force to study regions, but postponed that and decided to conduct a survey at regional level instead. Maloney presented the survey to the Board, which will be distributed to participants at AAR (and WECSOR) meeting. She will send November 2009 minutes of REDS meeting to AAR/WR Board members. Maloney noted that we are in the midst of a lot of organizational change at the national level. Maloney asked Section Chairs to announce and distribute the survey at sections.

Ali asked why the region could not get more money. Palmer noted that California may be paying more in national dues than in services received. Perhaps national priorities should be shifted from national to regional interests. Razak noted that the survey might give information indicating that more people go to the regional meeting rather than the national meeting. She asked Maloney to request the data, to build the case for more money coming to the region. Maloney said national AAR would ask for a rationale in increase in budget. Razak said one expense would be scholarship money for travel and expenses. Other scholarships (stipends for finishing books, dissertation scholarships, etc.) could also be provided with additional funds. Silverman suggested alternative and creative fundraising techniques. Razak suggested developing a budget for what we'd like. She agreed to be the point person for this as the Past President. Maloney asked for

this info by the April 8 REDS meeting. She said WECSOR could also be the conduit for fundraising. Palmer suggested that we provide Razak with programmatic elements that need funding; that we demonstrate to AAR National is not sufficient. He also suggested that at the WECSOR meeting we discuss fundraising through WECSOR.

3. Financial Report. Maloney reported on the AAR subvention of \$2500. We started out (June 30, 2009) with a larger balance than usual because of the lack of award winners (\$3,535.71). Anticipated expenses for this meeting are \$3,260. She prefers a cushion of \$2500, because the future is uncertain. She requested itemized receipts for reimbursement, with name and date. Maloney has asked national AAR for more money for the region (unsuccessfully). Silverman asked why money could not be allocated proportionally, based on size, population. She noted the independence of WECSOR to make decisions and control meetings. Razak noted that WECSOR coordinates the regional meeting for AAR/WR, which is very convenient. Razak noted that she paid the Plenary Speaker \$250 out of her own money, on top of the usual \$500 AAR/WR honorarium.

MSP The budget was accepted as amended.

MSP To increase the stipend from \$500 to \$750 on a one time basis for this year only.

MSP To set the amount of the honorarium for the plenary speaker at \$500 for future meetings. This amount in no way indicates the value of plenary speakers, but rather indicates that senior scholars are appearing as a form of service.

RSP In light of the economic downturn and the hardships scholars and students are now facing, the AAR/WR Board asks that the AAR national organization increase the subvention to all regions by \$2500 each, to be used for programmatic enhancements e.g., travel expenses, catering, scholarships, awards, research stipends, and other programs identified by the regions. The Board requests that the Regionally Elected Directors adopt this resolution and present it to the national AAR board.

4. Revision of Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies. Moore proposed sending an email blast to AAR/WR with links to revised items on AAR/WR website and inviting comments from members; then sending a second email blast with a link to Survey Monkey (or another survey engine) asking people to vote on the revisions. Moore said the Constitution and Bylaws should be reviewed once again for determining process for making amendments, which she will do. The Board agreed to the process.

5. Section Chairs. Vacancies exist in the following areas: Religion and Ecology; and Religions of Asia FILL IN THE BLANKS. Silverman would like a co-chair for Jewish Studies. Von der Horst volunteered to be co-chair of Religion and the Arts. Sarah Robinson was suggested as chair of Religion and Ecology. Mara Lynn Keller might serve as co-chair of Religion and Ecology, or Women in Religion. Chris Chapple was also suggested. Saba Soomekh resigning from Jewish Studies. Marie Cartier is going off Queer Studies. Kristy Newton might be a section chair, e.g., women and religion.

Palmer asked what the current policy regarding Section Chairs was. The Policy File says nominations should be made to the Vice President and Program Chair, who will present to the Executive Board for election. Maloney suggested Sheila Briggs as a section chair (women and religion, 19th century, History of Christianity, Queer Studies). Doe Daughtry would like to co-chair Religion in America. Razak asked about developing recruiting tools: word of mouth, email blast, other processes. Viale asked for a recruiting pamphlet, e.g., FAQs, to distribute at student orientations, and other venues. Ali suggested that section chairs recruit their replacement, e.g., Assistant Professors. Palmer will write some FAQs and circulate to the Board, for ultimate posting on the website.

Razak asked about whether or not there could be three section co-chairs. The group agreed that three co-chairs would be a good way to recruit new chairs.

6. Board Vacancies. There was a discussion of reducing number of regional representatives from 6 to 4. It was agreed to do this, under the new bylaws. Viale will serve as a Southern California representative. Von der Horst will serve as Queer Advocate for another year. Moore asked about the Minority Advocate/Person of Color position, and whether it should be called Person of Color. Razak said she would like to serve once she goes off Womanist Panel. Palmer noted that the Board is placing names in nomination for approval by the members at the business meeting on Monday. Moore agreed to ask Roy Whitaker if he were interested. Yugar suggested Yaku Nwokocha for Minority Representative.

Board will nominate the following: Viale as Southern California Region Rep; Von der Horst as Queer Advocate; Yugar as Student Representative; Rokocha as Minority Advocate.

7. WECSOR. Razak thanked Smick for all his hard work. Smick reported that bank account has been transferred to himself and Mignon [Last name??]. ASU Religious Studies and Center for Jewish Studies is paying for part of the catering of the WECSOR Reception at the University Club. Smick said ASU Religious Studies students put together the packets for the conference. The program book was considerably cheaper than last year's book (from \$800 to \$560). Smick filed paperwork with the State of California for WECSOR. He still needs to submit a federal income tax form. Smick said that the official repository of WECSOR files are with him at Santa Clara University. Some back files are still housed at Claremont Graduate University, but Mignon is planning to send those. Smick will forward the agenda to WECSOR Board meeting to AAR/WR Board members; items included 2011 meeting, status of relationship with WECSOR. Maloney asked Smick if the dates at Whittier (March 26-28) would work for him; he said they were. He did not make a site visit this year, and that saved money.

Razak asked if there were particular challenges to this site, and if there were improvements needed. He reported that ASU was much better than SCU, due to ASU's previous experience, going so far as to indicate a token of appreciation. Palmer said an acknowledgement at the reception should be made. Silverman asked why Queer

screenings ended up off-campus; Smick said he worked with Religious Studies scheduler and those seemed to be the only rooms available. He did not think it was targeted against "queers." Ali said rooms at the Memorial Union are very expensive, and that the climate at ASU is very liberal and gay-friendly. Razak asked that we pay extra attention to this issue.

Palmer asked if attendance had dropped off because of venue at ASU. There are about 130 online registrations, 4 mail-ins, 30-34 WJSA; about 180 pre-registrations including WJSA. He anticipates 100 more registrations on-site. Palmer asked about registration last year, Smick thought 250-300. This year 6 publishers are exhibiting. Razak asked how people register for the conference, as AAR/WR or WECSOR. ASU is registering WJSA. Smick said we will be able to identify AAR registrants on-site. Viale requested signage for the conference. She also asked for on-site registration the day before the conference officially begins. Smick proposed making permanent signs for future signage that say WECSOR. ASU had promised signs for Sunday.

8. Presidential Line. Souad T. Ali agreed to serve as Vice President/Program Chair for 2011-2012, but due to a sabbatical this fall she is reluctant to take on more responsibilities. Palmer will ask Franz Metcalf to be Vice President/Program Chair. Palmer will also ask Scott Lucas if Metcalf declines.

Board will nominate Ali for Vice President/Program Chair Elect at Monday board meeting.

9. The 2011 meeting will be at Whittier College (March 26-28). Rosemary Carbine will be very helpful on-site.

10. The meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

Notes prepared by Rebecca Moore
13 March 2010