AUGUST 13-14, 2019 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
American Sociological Association
August 13-14, 2019
New York

Participants August 13: Mary Romero (President), Christine Williams (President-Elect), Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (Past President), Grace Kao (Vice President), Joya Misra (Vice President-Elect), Christopher Uggen (Past Vice President), David Takeuchi (Secretary), Nina Bandelj, Mabel Berezin, Kelly H. Chong, Kimberly Ann Goyette, Erin Kelly, Monica McDermott, Wendy Leo Moore, Andrew J. Perrin, Jennifer Reich, Sara Shostak, Zulema Valdez, Rhys H. Williams; Staff: Nancy Kidd (Executive Officer), Les Briggs, Teresa Ciabattari, Karen Gray Edwards, Mark Fernando, Naomi Paiss, Michelle Randall, Jean Shin, Margaret Weigers Vitullo. Guests: Ruha Benjamin, Maria Krysan, Nancy López, Aldon Morris, Rhacel Salazar Parreñas, Vincent Roscigno

President Romero called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m. on August 13.

1. Agenda

A motion was made by Kelly to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Moore. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Announcements, Updates, and Reports

Romero indicated that written reports were provided on executive office activity, membership, department affiliates, sections, journal subscription fees, the election, the Task Force on First Generation and Working-Class People in Sociology, and open data discussions. Kidd provided an update to the open data report.

3. Consent Agenda

President Romero presented the consent agenda which included approval of March 1-2, 2019 Council meeting minutes; May 23, 2019 Council conference call minutes, July 2, 2019 Council report of ballot vote; an extended JSTOR agreement; continued support for the Annual Meeting Travel Fund procedures; a budget line reallocation; an addition to the editor application guidelines; a request from the Committee on the Status of LGBTQ People in Sociology; and an amendment to the SAN participation requirements. A question of clarification was asked.

A motion was made by Perrin to approve the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Bandelj. Motion carried unanimously.
4. **Investment Review**

Council was provided with a recent report from our investment adviser, and Director of Finance Les Briggs presented an overview of the results.


ASA hires an outside accounting firm to perform an audit of our financial statements at the end of each fiscal year. Council was provided with the written report of the independent auditor, and Secretary Takeuchi shared what EOB learned during its discussion with the auditor in June. The auditor’s opinion states that ASA’s financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Association as of December 31, 2018, and the change in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the U.S. We had a clean audit with no management letter.

6. **2018 Year-end Budget Report**

Kidd indicated that a detailed year-end budget versus actual revenue and expense report for 2018 was provided in the meeting materials. ASA ended the year with a balanced budget.

7. **Year-to-date 2019 Budget Report**

Kidd provided a summary of year-to-date revenue and expense for 2019. Overall, the budget is very tight and we are managing closely to ensure a balanced budget at year-end. The primary concern is the high cost of the New York meeting, including hotel attrition. Discussion ensued.

8. **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Questions on the Membership Form**

Council discussed a proposal from the Sociologists for Trans Justice Demographics Subcommittee to make changes to ASA’s sexual orientation and gender identity questions.

_A motion was made by Perrin to accept the proposal as presented and as endorsed by the ASA Sex and Gender Section, the Council of the ASA Sexualities Section, the Council of the LGBTQ Caucus, the Sociologists for Women in Society Council, and the ASA Committee on the Status of LGBTQ People in Sociology. Seconded by Moore. Motion carried with 7 for, 4 against, and 6 abstentions._

9. **Harassment Working Group Proposals (part 1)**

Council moved into executive session at 3:45 p.m. to discuss a memo from the Harassment Working Group with a variety of policy recommendations.

Council moved out of executive session at 5:10 p.m.
Council agreed to convey great appreciation to the Harassment Working Group for all of the good educational work they have done on this issue, including the new best practices document. Council decided to continue discussing this issue the next day.

Council took a break at 5:15 p.m. and reconvened at 5:23 p.m.

10. Condominium Sale Proposal

Director of Finance Les Briggs and Executive Director Nancy Kidd presented a recommendation from the Committee on Executive Office and Budget to sell the 5th floor of 1430 K Street and consolidate operations on the 6th floor. The proposal included a detailed review of our current real estate situation and the financial problems it confers, a detailed account of the recommended alternative, and four other detailed alternative scenarios for comparative purpose. Discussion ensued.

_A motion was made by R. Williams to consolidate our operations on the 6th floor of 1430 K Street and sell the 5th floor of 1430 K Street and authorize any deal that meets the following specifications: Maximum spend from unrestricted investments of $3,000,000 (while retaining no less than six months of operating budget in investments/cash); maximum loan of $3,500,000 (with amortization ranging from 10-20 years); and maximum deficit to cover of $6,000,000. Should an alternative, but seemingly viable, option emerge, Council will convene to consider the alternative. Further, EOB and Council will continue to review this plan at all subsequent meetings should a deal not have been made by the time of this meeting. Seconded by Bonilla-Silva. Motion carried unanimously._

11. Outgoing Member Appreciation

Council extended gratitude to Eduardo Bonilla-Silva for his exemplary service as President of the Association, Christopher Uggen for his exemplary service as Vice President, David Takeuchi for his exemplary service as Secretary, and Nina Bandelj, Mabel Berezin, Monica McDermott, and Andrew Perrin for their exemplary service on Council.

President Romero adjourned the meeting at 5:54 p.m. on August 13.

Participants August 14: Christine Williams (President), Aldon Morris (President-elect), Mary Romero (Past President), Joya Misra (Vice President) (early departure), Rhacel Salazar Parreñas (Vice President-elect), Grace Kao (Past Vice President), Nancy López (Secretary), Ruha Benjamin, Kelly H. Chong, Kimberly Ann Goyette, Erin Kelly, Maria Krysan, Wendy Leo Moore, Jennifer Reich, Vincent Roscigno, Sara Shostak, Zulema Valdez, Rhys H. Williams; Absent: Laura Hamilton; **Staff:** Nancy Kidd (Executive Officer), Les Briggs, Teresa Ciabattari, Karen Gray Edwards, Mark Fernando, Naomi Paiss (early departure), Michelle Randall, Jean Shin, Margaret Weigers Vitullo. **Guests:** Jules Bacon, James V. Fenelon, Kimberly Huyser, Dwanna L. McKay, Kari Norgaard, Desi Rodriguez-Lonebear, Carmela Marie Roybal (for discussion on Indigenous Peoples/Native Nations only)
President Williams called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. on August 14. Introductions were made and Williams provided an overview of the day. Conflict of interest and confidentiality were also discussed.

12. Leadership Positions (part 1)

President Williams proposed a process for evaluating the nominees for various leadership positions which involves multiple approaches for sharing concerns with the group.

A motion as made by Kelly to approve the proposed approach. Seconded by Romero. Motion carried with 17 for and one abstention.


Council had an extensive discussion about the report of the Task Force on Membership.

A motion was made by Romero to support the idea of establishing two new types of organizational communities: professional communities and identity-based communities, with Council considering a detailed proposal in March. Seconded by López. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Kelly to provide tools and organizational structures for sections, communities, and their individual members to communicate with each other, volunteer, and become engaged with the association throughout the year. Seconded by Goyette. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by R. Williams to rethink the Annual Meeting and develop a variety of initiatives, both large and small, to create a more welcoming and beneficial experience for attendees. Once the new communities are established, appoint an Annual Meeting Redesign Committee to assess current practices, including how time and space is distributed across committees, sections, and communities and propose innovation as appropriate. As a short-term pilot test of a small initiative, in 2020 remove affiliation from Annual Meeting badges. Seconded by Shostak. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Kelly to undertake a comprehensive review of our membership dues and meeting registration fee structures to explore whether there are ways to redistribute revenue sources in the interest of increasing affordability for members who need it. For 2020, provide two temporary cost-relief initiatives: a) offer part-time contingent faculty a reduced membership fee (equivalent to other reduced fee categories including international associates and high school teachers) and a promotional discount on Annual Meeting registration of 25%; b) offer one free section membership to all new members and former members who are returning after a lapse of five or more years. Further, move to an anniversary-based membership year rather than a calendar-based membership year to ensure that all members would receive 12 months of benefits, irrespective of join date. Further, increase the variety of cities where the Annual Meeting is held, considering a number of factors. Include factors that are directly salient to member decision making, such as the cost of the hotel rooms, transportation to and around the
city, affordability of the attractions and outlets within the city, and the general appeal of the location to members, as well as factors that impact the financial success of the meeting but are less visible to members, such as the cost of conference facilities, catering, and audio visual support. Seconded by Valdez. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by R. Williams to increase professional development opportunities at the Annual Meeting and through the year and to continue to expand public engagement efforts, including media outreach and outreach to policymakers. Further, to refine the Annual Meeting submission and review process to be more responsive to the needs and preferences of sociologists. Starting in 2020, push back the Annual Meeting submission deadline to the end of January. Explore the possibilities of moving to abstract-only submissions and/or using an anonymous review system. Further, to enhance and increase communications from ASA to members and provide opportunities for ASA members to provide ongoing feedback to ASA. Seconded by Kelly. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Shostak to express appreciation for the work of the Task Force on Membership. Seconded by Reich. Motion carried unanimously.

Council took a break at 9:47 a.m. and reconvened at 10:00 a.m.

14. Discussion with Guests on Indigenous Peoples/Native Nations


Guests departed at 10:30 a.m. and Council discussed next steps. Council expressed gratitude to our guests for sharing their experience and expertise and will continue the conversation about these issues at the March Council meeting.

A motion was made by Valdez to provide one special session and one roundtable, in addition to the regular session, at the 2020 Annual Meeting for this group of scholars. Seconded by Shostak. Motion carried unanimously.

15. Statement on Student Evaluations of Teaching

Council discussed a draft ASA Statement on Student Evaluations of Teaching that is meant to be a resource for sociology faculty to start conversations on their respective campuses about how best to evaluate teaching effectiveness for personnel decisions. Council also discussed a member request on this topic to engage in related legal action.

A motion was made by Reich to approve the ASA Statement on Student Evaluations of Teaching. Seconded by R. Williams. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Romero to seek endorsements for the statement from sister societies to increase its reach and impact. Seconded by López. Motion carried unanimously.
16. Governing Documents Revision

ASA is undergoing a routine governing document revision in part to update our incorporation status and in part as standard best practice. Council discussed several proposed revisions to the existing documents, including some restructuring of the documents, new items for inclusion, and amended terminology, among other things.

A motion was made by Morris to support the proposed revisions in concept/principle, appoint a 3-person oversight committee drawn from outgoing Council members to vet the final proposal, and authorize staff to draft amended governing documents for Council consideration in March. Seconded by Romero. Motion carried unanimously.

Council took a break for lunch at 11:57 a.m. and reconvened at 12:30 p.m. in executive session.

9. Harassment Working Group Proposals (continued)

Council moved out of executive session at 1:45.

A motion was made by Morris to approve the revised policies on disclosures for awards and leadership positions. Seconded by López. Motion carried with 17 for and one abstention.

A motion was made by R. Williams to develop an awards revocation policy and a policy for removing people from leadership positions for consideration in March with the parameters as discussed by Council. Seconded by Kao. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Romero to express appreciation to the working group for developing a proposal for an alternative avenue to support members who have experienced harassment, which prompted significant discussion among Council members. Council will take the spirit of the proposal and continue developing a new approach for the association in the coming months. Seconded by Moore. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Shostak to amend the COPE policies and procedures document with respect to the appeals body and the two articulated points of clarification as presented. Seconded by R. Williams. Motion carried unanimously.

17. 2020 Annual Meeting Fees

Council discussed a proposal from the Committee on Executive Office and Budget to adjust all 2020 Annual Meeting pre-registration fees by an inflationary increase and to maintain the current price difference between pre-registration and regular fees. Fees for sister societies were presented for comparison. An inflationary increase was also proposed for child care fees. No increases were proposed for other non-registration Annual Meeting fees. Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Kelly to approve the 2020 Annual Meeting fees as presented. Seconded by R. Williams. Motion carried with 15 for and 2 abstentions.
18. 2020 Membership Dues

Council discussed a proposal from the Committee on Executive Office and Budget to maintain current membership dues for the categories of not employed, <$30,000 regular, and $30,000-$39,999 regular and to adjust other categories by an inflationary increase. Historical data were presented as were fees for sister societies for comparative perspective. Discussion ensued.

*A motion was made by R. Williams to approve the 2020 membership dues as presented. Seconded by Morris. Motion carried with 10 for, 3 opposed, and 4 abstentions*

19. Section Journal Policies

In order to ensure that we provide good support for our section journals and that section journal editors feel fully included as ASA editors, we are undertaking a review of our publications policies to provide clarity and consistency when it comes to managing section journals. Council discussed several policy considerations related to eligibility for editorial positions, appointments/removals/terms for editorial positions, adjustments to issues/pages, reporting, finances, timing, and meetings. Council provided feedback on these topics that will then be incorporated into conversations with sections and the Publications Committee. Council will consider a formal policy proposal once the relevant constituencies have also provided input on the key issues.

12. Leadership positions (continued)

Council moved into executive session at 2:58 p.m. to discuss the report of the Committee on Committees, other committee nominations, and a proposal for external representation. Council moved out of executive session at 3:03 p.m. *A motion was made by Kelly to approve the slates as presented. Seconded by Moore. Motion carried unanimously.*

20. Current issues

Romero asked Council to add three items to the Council agenda: a statement against white supremacy, consideration of academic freedom for Palestinians, and visa denials.

*A motion was made by Romero to draft and release a statement against white supremacy which will include sociological research on the subject. Seconded by Moore. Motion carries unanimously.*

*A motion was made by Romero to draft a statement in support of Palestinian scholars who are being denied freedom of movement which will be brought to Council for consideration in March. Seconded by Moore. Motion carried unanimously.*

There was agreement to address the visa issue at Council’s March meeting.

President Williams adjourned the meeting at 3:46 p.m.