

**Minutes of the 68<sup>th</sup> Eastern Colleges Science Conference (ECSC) Board of Trustees Annual Meeting, April 5, 2014,  
Marist College, Poughkeepsie, New York**

**Officers**

Chairman of the Board: Donald Stearns (Wagner College)

Vice President: Jay Pike (Providence College)

Treasurer: Lance Evans (Manhattan College)

**Other Board Members and Guests in Attendance**

Brandy Bessette-Symons (Ithaca College)

Jack Breen (Providence College)

Sue Deschenes (Sacred Heart University)

Neil Fitzgerald (Marist College)\*

Zofia Gagnon (Marist College)

Connie Greene (Niagara University)

Robert Greene (Niagara University)

Carl Hoegler (Mount Saint Mary College)

Barry Hoopengardner (Central Connecticut State University)

Adam Houlihan (Randolph College)

Kristen Jay (Marist College)\*

Martin Kapper (Central Connecticut State University)

Michael Kotarski (Niagara University)

Helen Murphy (John Carroll University)

Brian Palestis (Wagner College)

Ronny Priefer (Western New England University)

Nicole Roy (Sacred Heart University)

Cyndy Scheibe (Ithaca College)

Walter Steiner (Niagara University)

Cyrilla Wideman (John Carroll University)

Janet Williams (Elms College)

\*Member of Marist College Host Committee, guest in attendance

## Action Items and Discussion

The meeting was called to order by Don Stearns at 12:31 p.m.

**1. Nominations to the Board:** No new members presented. Don reminded members that board member nominations can be forwarded to him at any time. Nominees can be elected to the board by electronic voting.

**2. ECSC Officer Positions of President, Vice President, and Secretary:** For personal reasons, Kirk Bartholomew recently resigned his positions as President and Secretary of ECSC. In the past, we have had both a board chair and a president, whose main responsibility was to assist the board chair when needed. Jay Pike spoke with a representative from the Rhode Island state department where the ECSC documents of incorporation are filed. Jay's communication reads, "The representative said that the only thing we need as a corporation is three directors (or representatives). It is up to us to decide how we want to structure our corporation..."

Election of ECSC Secretary: Lance Evans was unanimously elected as ECSC secretary.

Election of ECSC President and Elimination of Position of ECSC Vice President: There was discussion of the positions of ECSC president and vice president. Lance Evans stated that when he was elected as board chair, he also served as ECSC president. Mike Kotarski said that he was elected ECSC president while Lance was still board chair, and the two positions have been seen as separate positions over the years. After some discussion, the board decided to retain both the ECSC chair and the ECSC president positions. Jay Pike was unanimously elected as ECSC president. The vice-president position was vacated but could be reinstated if necessary in the future. Some board members suggested that the duties of the president be described in the future.

**3. Treasurer's Report:** Lance Evans reported that ECSC has a balance of about \$17,000. Our only annual expenses are for the ECSC website domain and website contract. Both of these expenses cost about \$300 annually. The cost of incorporation in the State of Rhode Island costs about \$25 annually.

**4. Proposal from the ECSC Judging Rubric Revision Committee:** With board approval last April (2013), the ECSC Judging Rubric Revision Committee was formed to recommend revisions of the criteria used to judge oral and poster presentations. That committee submitted proposed changes to the ECSC judging rubric sheet (**Appendix A**, revised to reflect a friendly amendment to substitute "Research Design" for "Experimental Design" and to change the word maximum for the abstract from 200 to 250 words), as well as the ECSC judging report form (**Appendix B**). After some discussion, the new, revised judging rubric and the new judging report were unanimously approved.

**5. ECSC Student Manuscript Evaluations:** There was some discussion regarding the evaluation of submitted manuscripts. Currently, manuscripts are judged as excellent or not, without required comments. Don Stearns stated that, given the voluntary nature of manuscript evaluation, requiring manuscript reviews would likely greatly decrease the number of potential evaluators whose major professional responsibilities must take priority. Even with the current situation, Don often receives apologetic turn-downs for evaluation of student papers. Another factor is the approximately two-week window within which all student manuscripts must be evaluated (this year, there were 23 student papers).

**6. Dissemination of ECSC Student Accomplishments:** Some discussion occurred regarding the publication of manuscripts, posters and PowerPoint presentations. Some pros and cons of this effort were discussed with no resolutions. Cyrilla Wideman thought it risky to encourage students to publish ECSC posters on ePosters ([www.e posters.net](http://www.e posters.net)), because of possible intellectual property theft. She thought it a better idea to post these presentations on the ECSC website, where there is more ECSC control. Host committee members from Niagara University were urged to consider dissemination items for April 2015. Robert Greene will look into the possibility of an ECSC-sponsored recording of the spring, 2015 conference at Niagara University, for posting on the ECSC website. A photographer might be hired to help with images of the conference. Such recording would require written permission to record and post. Intellectual properties will be considered through Niagara University's legal counsel.

**7. Upgrading the ECSC Website and Spreading the Good Word of ECSC:** The following ECSC Website Committee was formed:

Jack Breen (Providence College)  
Lance Evans (Manhattan College)  
Cyndy Scheibe (Ithaca College)  
Don Stearns (Wagner College)

The committee will consider how to upgrade the ECSC website so that student presentations (PowerPoint slides, posters, manuscripts) in appropriate electronic format can be posted (with written permission of the presenter). Board members were encouraged to send Don names and contact information from local institutions that might be interested in ECSC, so that he could, in turn, share that information with the ECSC Website Committee. The committee was also charged with preparing an e-brochure for dissemination to appropriate faculty. The committee members would send this brochure to those contacts Don receives from board members, as well as to those institutions within a five-mile radius of their home institutions. In addition, Bob Greene, as a member of the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR), can send the brochure to fellow CUR members, using CUR's extensive e-mail listing.

**8. Proposal to Encourage Additional Institutions to Become ECSC Participants:** To encourage institutions new to ECSC to become participants, Don Stearns proposed an introductory offer for institutions new to ECSC in, say, the past 10 years. (An institution that sent participants to ECSC many years ago but not in the past 10 years would be eligible, as well as institutions that have never before participated in

the conference.) What would the introductory offer be? The idea of deeply discounted individual registration fees for up to six participants from each introductory institution. It would be up to the institution to determine for itself how many of those six would be faculty and how many would be students. Perhaps a faculty member from each introductory institution could also be invited to attend the ECSC board meeting as well, to see how the ECSC works. By acclimation, the ideas were accepted.

**9. Future ECSC Meetings:** Niagara University will be hosting the next (69<sup>th</sup>) annual meeting of the ECSC Saturday, April 18, 2015. No institutions have yet committed to hosting the conference after 2015. Please contact Don Stearns if you would like your institution considered. Having willing hosts is crucial for sustaining ECSC.

**10. Awards for Student Presentations:** Cyndy Scheibe will send to the board a proposal that continues the evaluation of student presentations but also addresses concerns regarding the current granting of awards for best student presentations.

The meeting was adjourned 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lance S. Evans  
Treasurer and Secretary Elect of ECSC Board of Trustees  
May 12, 2014

**APPENDIX A: ECSC Judging Rubric, Revised and Approved During April 5, 2014 ECSC Board Meeting**

**Eastern Colleges Science Conference Judging Rubric**  
(Approved by ECSC Board April 5, 2014)

CATEGORY	LOW	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	HIGH	VERY HIGH
<b>I. SCIENTIFIC MERIT:</b>					
<b>A. Background and Research Design (15)</b>	No Goal or Hypothesis (3)	Only Goal or Hypothesis (6)	Goal or Hypothesis Stated. Some Unrelated Background Literature (9)	Stated Goal or Hypothesis with Related Background Literature but no citations (12)	Stated Goal or Hypothesis with Related Background Literature and citations (15)
<b>B. Methodology (10)</b>	Materials Listed as a "grocery list" (2)	Methods included in general terms without description or a list of instructions (4)	Both Material and Methods indicated without explanation of how they are used in the study (6)	Materials are embedded in the Methods with explanation of how they are used in the study (8)	Materials are embedded in the Methods with explanation of how they are used in the study. Protocol is also indicated. (10)
<b>C. Results (25)</b>	Results are presented, however little to no supporting data that addresses the goal or hypothesis are presented, analyzed or summarized in a manner consistent with disciplinary norms. The following flaws may or may not be present and lead to point deductions: Raw, unanalyzed data are included and/or the data are summarized incompletely or unclearly in figures/ tables and/or statistical treatment is not appropriate to the discipline and/or Figure Legends and text are unclear or incomplete. (5)	Data presented minimally address the goal or hypothesis and/or are not analyzed/summarized in a manner consistent with disciplinary norms. The following flaws may or may not be present and lead to point deductions: Raw, unanalyzed data are included and/or the data are summarized incompletely or unclearly in figures and tables and/or statistical treatment is not appropriate to the discipline and/or Figure Legends and text are unclear or incomplete. (10)	Data presented are somewhat incomplete although it addresses the goal or hypothesis and is consistent with disciplinary norms. The following flaws may or may not be present and lead to point deductions: Data are summarized incompletely or unclearly in figures and tables and/or statistical treatment is not appropriate to the discipline and/or Figure Legends and text are unclear or incomplete. (15)	Data presented are <b>sufficient</b> to address, the goal or hypothesis and is consistent with disciplinary norms. Data are summarized in appropriate figures and tables and statistical treatment is appropriate to the discipline. Figure Legends and text clearly explain figures and/or tables (20)	Data presented are <b>substantial</b> and adequate to fully address the goal or hypothesis and is consistent with disciplinary norms. Data are summarized in appropriate figures and tables and statistical treatment is appropriate to the discipline. Figure legends and text clearly explain figures and/or tables. (25)

<p><b>D. Discussion and Conclusions (15)</b></p>	<p>Hypothesis/Goal status is not clear. No additional relevant material presented or additional material is incompletely addressed. (3)</p>	<p>Hypothesis/Goal status is clear. Some category of relevant additional material is included. (6)</p>	<p>Hypothesis/Goal status is clear. Two to three categories of relevant additional material missing or incompletely addressed. (9)</p>	<p>Hypothesis/Goal status is clear. One category of relevant additional material missing or incompletely addressed. (12)</p>	<p>Hypothesis/Goal status is clear. All <b>relevant</b> additional discussion material is included. "Very High" ranked discussion sections would usually include the following categories of additional information: additional conclusions related to the original hypothesis/goal, relationship of results to other published work, future investigations suggested by results, and limitations of current study (15)</p>
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II. PRESENTATION MERIT AND DESIGN:					
<b>A. Abstract</b> <b>*Abstract may or may not be included on poster as is appropriate to the discipline. If not included on the poster, refer to the program book.</b>	Abstract more than 250 words a largely incomplete summary of presentation content with omissions of multiple required components: background, goals and/or hypothesis, experimental design, results and conclusions. (1)	Abstract more than 200 words and/or an Incomplete summary of presentation content with omissions in more than two of required components: background, goals and/or hypothesis, experimental design, results and conclusions. (2)	Abstract 200 words or less. Incomplete summary of presentation content with omissions in one or two of required components: background, goals and/or hypothesis, experimental design, results and conclusions. (3)	Abstract 200 words or less. Effective, language completely summarizes all sections of the presentation including background, goals and/or hypothesis, experimental design, results and conclusions. (4)	Abstract 200 words or less. Effective, thorough and concise language completely summarizes all sections of the presentation including background, goals and/or hypothesis, experimental design, results and conclusions. (5)
<b>B. Logical Presentation (10)</b>	Scattered presentation of disconnected Ideas (2)	Student starts to present the work using Standard format (Intro, Hypothesis, M&M, Results, Discussion) but does not develop ideas clearly (4)	Student does present the work using standard format, but shows deficits about why s/ he is doing the study (6)	Student does present the work using standard format, and presents only part of the study clearly-but omits some items (8)	Student does present the work using standard format, shows insight into the Why, How, What of the study (10)
<b>C. Ability to Answer Questions (10)</b>	Could not answer any questions (2)	Could answer SOME questions with assistance from evaluator (4)	Could answer MOST questions confidently with minor assistance from evaluator (6)	Could answer MOST questions with confidence (8)	Ability to answer ALL questions from the evaluator with confidence (10)
<b>D. Presentation Mechanics and Design (5 + 5)</b>  <b>A. Platforms</b>  <b>B. Poster</b>	Incoherent Poor use of time. Difficult to hear (1)  <b>A.</b> Figures and tables not clear, color distracting; errors are common (1)  <b>B.</b> Format of the poster is not appropriate, content largely disorganized, obvious spelling or formatting mistakes	Organized talk/presentation, but hesitates, lack of flow, overuse of notes, sometimes imprecise (2)  <b>A.</b> Text is too small to read; too much text; lack of photos; mostly laid out properly (2)  <b>B.</b> Format of the poster is inconsistent or improper in its lay out and/or the content is disorganized (2)	Organized talk/presentation, reads talk from notes, no eye contact, and/or confident, dull monotone (3)  <b>A.</b> Mostly laid out properly, mistakes apparent in figures and/or tables (3)  <b>B.</b> Most items laid out properly; several sections of the poster need clarification or use inadequate font size (3)	Organized, clear but rushed, sparing use of notes (4)  <b>A.</b> Mostly laid out properly; organized graphs; more photographs could improve presentation (4)  <b>B.</b> ALL sections of the poster properly laid out, but they are over-abundant, crowded and sometimes confusing to the reader (4)	Organized, audible, engaging interesting, slow and clear, enthusiastic, good eye contact, good use of pointer (5)  <b>A.</b> All PowerPoint slides are properly and clearly labeled; graphs and tables are clear; photographs help to clarify presentation (5)  <b>B.</b> ALL sections of the poster are laid out properly, are easy to understand and read (5)

**APPENDIX B: ECSC Judging Report, Approved During April 5, 2014 ECSC Board Meeting**

**Eastern Colleges Science Conference Judging Report**

(Approved by ECSC Board April 5, 2014)

Student Name	
School	
Platform or Poster	
Session	

<b>Scientific Merit (65 points possible)</b>	<b>Score</b>
Background and Research Design (15 points)	
Methodology (10 points)	
Results (Including Content of Figures and Tables) (25 points)	
Discussion and Conclusion Statements (15 points)	
<b>Scientific Merit Subtotal (max = 65 points)</b>	

<b>Presentation Merit and Design (30 points possible)</b>	<b>Score</b>
Abstract (see note on Judging Rubric) (5 Points)	
Logical Presentation (10 points)	
Ability to Answer Questions in a Knowledgeable Manner (10 points)	
Presentation Mechanics and Design (10 points)	
<b>Presentation Merit Subtotal (max = 35 points)</b>	

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	<b>TOTAL (max = 100 points)</b>
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**Comments:**