

Minutes of the 73rd Eastern Colleges Science Conference (ECSC) Board of Trustees Annual Meeting, April 6, 2019, Manhattan College, Riverdale, New York

Officers in Attendance

Chair of the Board: Don Stearns (Wagner College)

President and Assistant to the Board Chair: Jay Pike (Providence College)

Secretary and Treasurer: Lance Evans (Manhattan College)

Other Board Members and Guests in Attendance

Brandy Bessette-Symons (Ithaca College)

Paula Checchi (Marist College, guest)

Suzanne Deschenes (Sacred Heart University)

Barry Hoopengardner (Central Connecticut State University)

Anthony Kapolka (Wilkes University)*

Ghislaine Mayer (Manhattan College)

Pauline Mosley (Pace University)

Barbara Murdoch (Eastern Connecticut State University)

Helen Murphy (John Carroll University)

Brian Palestis (Wagner College)

Nicole Roy (Sacred Heart University)

Cyndy Scheibe (Ithaca College)

Cyrilla Wideman (John Carroll University)

Bryan Wilkins (Manhattan College)

David Zuckerman (Iona College, guest)

*Member, ECSC Travel Grant Program Committee

Action Items and Discussion

The meeting was called to order by Don Stearns at approximately 12:15 p.m. with a welcome to all members and guests.

1. Approval of the agenda and call for additional agenda items: Don Stearns stated that any board member could introduce any agenda item for consideration. The agenda was accepted.

2. Nominations to the board: The following individuals were nominated and unanimously elected to the board:

Paula M. Checchi, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Biology, Marist College (nominated by Don Stearns)

David Zuckerman, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Biology, Iona College (nominated by Lance Evans)

[]3. Treasurer's report: Lance Evans reported that ECSC has a current balance of about \$16,000, not including any surplus amount coming in after income and costs are determined for ECSC 2019.

4. Registration and banquet discounts considered for spring, 2020 conference:

On the recommendation of the ECSC treasurer, the board unanimously approved a proposal to extend the current per capita \$5 registration and \$7 banquet subsidies, with elimination of the \$100 institutional fee, for ECSC 2020, when the topic will be revisited.

5. Report from the Travel Grant Program: Don Stearns relayed the following report from Ronny Priefer, Chair of the Travel Grant Program: John Carroll University and Central Connecticut State University received travel grant awards for the ECSC 2019 of \$1,000 each. For review, there are three current members: Anthony Kapolka (term ends spring, 2020), Walter Steiner (term ends spring, 2020), and Ronny Priefer (term ends spring, 2021). The original approval of this committee stated that no member may serve more than two consecutive terms but can rejoin after a minimum one-year break. Therefore, we will need to vote for two vacancies next spring. Ronny Priefer proposes that one of the two upcoming vacancies should be for a two-year term only (with the traditional three-year terms to follow). This arrangement will ensure that every year there will be an election and the institutional memory is not held by only one person. The proposal was unanimously approved.

6. Election of a new ECSC president: The ECSC president assists the ECSC board, its officers, and the host committees where needed to ensure a successful conference each year. Since 2013, Jay Pike has served well in that capacity but is relinquishing that role effective at the close of this meeting. Lance Evans nominated Helen Murphy for the position. Helen accepted the nomination, and the board unanimously voted in favor.

7. Empirical research revisited: To clarify what can constitute empirical research, Don Stearns proposed the following yellow-highlighted addition to the paragraph describing empirical research in the ECSC Judging Guidelines for Platform and Poster Presentations, posted on the ECSC web site:

Both hypothesis testing and discovery-based research are acceptable for ECSC: Shortly after the abstract submission deadline, the ECSC host committee determines which abstracts are accepted for presentation.

The research should be empirical, drawing conclusions from observed and/or measured phenomena, involving hypothesis testing or discovery-based research that searches for patterns in nature.

While empirical evidence is often quantitative (e.g., measurements, surveys), it can also be qualitative (e.g., evidence taken from interviews), as long as the results are used to test a hypothesis or address a research question. (Note: While mining data banks and using informatics in search of meaningful patterns is an acceptable form of discovery-based research, a presentation that provides only a review of a topic or is entirely theoretical with no new information addressing a question is not considered empirical.) Please do not deduct points from a discovery-based research presentation because a specific hypothesis is not being tested experimentally. Instead, please look to see if the discovery-based research is designed to look for patterns that support a general hypothesis or goal.

The proposed addition was unanimously approved.

8. Spreading the good word of ECSC: During a discussion regarding how to spread the good word of ECSC, Cyndy Scheibe agreed to continue to receive and compile any contact information we send her regarding colleagues in institutions that may not know of ECSC, as well as appropriate science organizations. The goal would be to send those contacts an announcement of the spring ECSC each fall, perhaps in the form of an electronic flyer.

9. Old business and any additional items: Members of the host committee for Sacred Heart University, which will be hosting ECSC 2020, expressed concern that near-campus hotels are requiring an unrealistic October 1st deadline for discount lodging reservations and also requiring that ECSC pay for all reserved rooms for the conference as of October 1st, even if some rooms go vacant later. For past conferences, hotels have allowed a number of rooms to be booked for an ECSC discount until a reasonable deadline before the scheduled conference, after which the discount is removed, without obligating ECSC to pay for reserved rooms. During the discussion, there was the suggestion to consider searching a bit further from campus (as much as 10 miles) for more reasonable conditions for reserving lodging for ECSC.

10. Future ECSC meetings: Sacred Heart University (Fairfield, Connecticut) will host the next (74th) annual meeting of the ECSC Saturday, April 4, 2020. Please contact Don Stearns if you would like your institution considered to host the conference. Having willing hosts is crucial for sustaining ECSC.

The meeting was adjourned 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lance S. Evans
Secretary and Treasurer of ECSC Board of Trustees