

ASOR Chairs Coordinating Council
Conference Call, February 4, 2016, 1:00pm EST

Present: Andy Vaughn, Sharon Herbert, Susan Ackerman, Danielle Fatkin, Tom Levy, Randy Younker, Robert Darby, Erin Darby, Cynthia Rufo

Absent: Laura Mazow, Chuck Jones, Geoff Emberling

I. Approval of Minutes

Minutes approved.

Susan offered to type up her notes from the CCC meeting at the Annual Meeting, since formal minutes were not taken.

II. Plenary Speaker

The Program Committee had a call in December in which they discussed possible plenary speakers for the Annual Meeting. The committee created a list with six finalists for the CCC to discuss. The speakers are broad-ranging in terms of geographical and chronological coverage. The PC chose candidates who embody both ASOR's traditional wheelhouse, as well as broader topics.

The CAP chair was pleased to see Cyprian Broodbank on the list. Broodbank holds one of the most important posts in archaeology in the UK. His area of study would appeal to both ASOR and AIA members. Finding ways to unite the two organizations has been a recent topic of discussion. Susan asked about the logistics of Broodbank traveling from the UK to San Antonio. Andy said ASOR would not be paying his airfare. Typically, the plenary speaker has been given two to four nights in the hotel and free registration to the meeting. ASOR considers the invitation to be an honor.

The CAP chair suggested that, should someone from overseas be chosen, Andy could reach out to AIA or local ASOR groups to organize a lecture tour to help make the trip more worthwhile, and possibly defray the airfare.

The COP chair liked Anna Belfer-Cohen for a speaker. She has a reputation for giving good presentations, and she would bring a pre-historian's perspective. She has a thick Russian accent, though her English is very fluent and she is a very prepared and polished speaker.

It was mentioned that Eric Cline would be great because he has popular appeal, has been very involved with ASOR, and is within the organization's traditional wheelhouse.

Marian Feldman was nominated because she is an art historian and represents a perspective that has not been heard in the plenary talk for many years. She works in Mesopotamia.

Michael McCormick is not traditionally within the realm of ASOR but he deals with big data and big history and has recently worked with a lot of material from the Near East. He would have broad appeal.

Sarah Parcak gave the junior scholar portion of the plenary address years ago and has done great public relations work for our field. She works solidly within ASOR's traditional area of interest.

Susan pointed out that Cline, Parcak, and Feldman are ASOR members, and the other three are not. It is possible that, with international scholars who do not regularly attend the meeting, it might be more challenging to get them to come.

The CAP chair said that Broodbank is someone who would want to build ties between his institution and our American institution. He is a very engaging speaker, examples of which can be found on YouTube.

Andy offered that he has heard from attendees that they have appreciated when we have recognized ASOR members by showcasing them as plenary speakers.

Feldman is a regular ASOR member, though she has not been part of the ASOR leadership. She gives generously and attends the meeting about every other year.

Sarah Parcak is a dynamo and she deals with satellite imagery and very interesting, out-of-the-box approaches. She won a TED award earlier this year. She is popular and in high demand. Sharon mentioned that, if Parcak agreed to speak, it would be interesting to link her work with the Syrian heritage project. She would be of interest to the junior scholars because she is on NatGeo and television. Sharon and others agreed.

The PC will submit a request to Susan to recommend Parcak, Broodbank, and Cline as finalists for the plenary speaker.

Susan mentioned that she has asked plenary speakers to review the videos on ASORtv when planning their talk. She asked the committee for suggestions on how to coach plenary speakers as far as style and tone of presentation. She cites Brian Rose as an example of a talk that went over particularly well. He spoke without notes, and he was not behind a podium. He spoke fluently and in an engaging, polished way. Is this less formal than we would like?

The committee generally agreed that Brian Rose was a good example, though it would be helpful to give more general examples so that the speaker does not feel boxed in to emulating a specific style of presentation. It was agreed that most people prefer to watch a dynamic speaker, rather than to watch a paper being read.

III. Reports from Committees

CAP: The chair has been working with his assistant, Matthew Vincent, to put together the online application for affiliation. It will be different from the past in that adherence to ASOR best practices and principles will be highlighted, and then get into the actual data about the project. The committee decided that all projects this year would re-apply using the new system. We hope to have the new system in place by next month.

Membership: The committee's main activity since November has been to increase interest in ASOR for our European colleagues. Vanessa Juloux in France has been helpful with this. It would be advantageous to have some activities in Europe for those who can't make it to the US for the Annual Meeting. The committee chair has an appointment on February 9 to learn about a potential location for a European gathering of some kind.

The Program Committee appreciated that Membership Committee's sensitivity to prioritizing the Annual Meeting and not creating a competing meeting.

A new student membership has been created for European students – a \$50 fee for non-North American members. Andy reported that already two students have utilized the discount in the week since it was announced. The \$30 undergrad rate has had about the same response. The discounted rates have been well-received, but have not attracted large numbers yet.

Publications: The committee is beginning an audit on NEA

Jr. Scholars – The committee has had a great response about the undergraduate rate reduction. Though there hasn't been a flood of new members, the chairs expect that new members will

increase as next year's meeting gets closer. The committee also noted that SBL just adopted a tiered membership scale.

Andy said that an undergraduate meeting registration rate is also being considered. He wondered if members would be willing to pay higher membership rates so that ASOR can offer lower student rates?

Program Committee: The committee has approved 18 new member-organized sessions for the Annual Meeting. The call for papers has gone out and now the chairs are waiting for abstracts to be submitted. The deadline is February 15. The chairs are also going through the list of standing sessions and looking at their long-term viability to see if there is enough member interest to sustain them. They are considering moving some of the most vibrant member-organized sessions to be standing sessions.

The CAP chair asked if there has been any change with the rule that a participant may only appear three times in the program? The committee chairs answered that a participant may appear as a presenter only one time and a session chair twice, but may appear as a coauthor as many times as necessary in the abstract book. The committee's current proposal is that only the presenters and session chairs will appear in the index.