

ASOR Chairs Coordinating Council
Conference Call Minutes
February 25, 2021, 11:00AM-12:00 PM EST

Present: Teddy Burgh, Helen Dixon, Tiffany Earley-Spadoni, Jane DeRose Evans, Sharon Herbert, Chuck Jones, Kevin McGeough, Marta Ostovich, Andy Vaughn, Lynn Welton

Absent: Steve Falconer, Allison Thomason

1. Approval of January Minutes: Minutes approved.

2. Discussion and Decision on the Plenary Speaker

Helen gave a little background on the discussion the Program Committee had surrounding the plenary speaker. A report was circulated via email prior to the meeting. The PC was close to unanimous in their first choice. People are enthusiastic about the number one candidate, but it is good to have a second candidate for back-up in case there are difficulties in scheduling and/or travel.

Teddy motioned to approve the candidates. Kevin seconded. All were in favor. All three candidates are approved by the CCC.

Sharon asked for input on suggested plenary topic, and brought up the PC's suggestion of a plenary panel. Helen said that the panel could serve as way of shaping plenary talk, and offer multiple perspectives on a possibly controversial topic.

Andy stated that we need more information on what the annual meeting is going to look like. Proposals are up from last couple of years.

2021 Proposal Stats:

In-Person Meeting = 35 abstracts

Virtual Meeting = 21 abstracts

Total: 56 (16 are duplicates – SAME in both components)

At this time in previous years we had:

2020 – 24 abstracts

2019 – 17 abstracts

2018 – 16 abstracts

Jane spoke in favor of the plenary panel, having seen such a panel work well at the AIA conference. She suggested asking the speaker to talk about cultural heritage. There was discussion of focusing on a field report for next year's plenary, as last year's topic was also cultural heritage. This year's speaker could also take a more data-driven approach.

Sharon will write inviting the speaker and also say that the PC is considering a panel.

3. Strategic Plan

Sharon circulated the current draft. The Executive Committee is meeting to discuss the draft during the first weekend in March. Sharon will send whatever comments the CCC has to EC. She took a programmatic approach. While the bullet points do not link directly to mission statement, they do reflect its goals.

One change is to replace “Near East & Wider Mediterranean” with “Southwest Asia & Greater Mediterranean Basin”. Helen noted that the PC has been making similar moves.

Sharon requested feedback on Area 3, and asked whether there was enough emphasis on BIPOC issues. Chuck stated that the work of DEI Task Force will be circulated to the Executive Committee before their meeting, as the Task Force needs to see their work reflected in the Strategic Plan.

Andy reported on efforts to support BIPOC students through the summer stipends. He has had conversations with colleagues in ACLS, AIC, and SBA, and ASOR needs to be consistent in how we use BIPOC.

Helen pointed out that “American” is still in our name. ASOR’s current efforts are grounded in American history, and addressing inequalities in our past.

Andy asked whether BIPOC should be described as “African American / Black and Indigenous People of Color” OR “African American / Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color. Discussion followed and members of the CCC looked at the <https://www.thebipocproject.org/> website, which uses, “and People of Color”, but focuses on Black and Indigenous peoples. Both Jane and Tiffany asked about whether this includes latinx individuals and whether latino students qualify for the BIPOC stipends. Andy replied that the stipends are open to all people of color, but there is a preference for Black/Indigenous applicants. Helen stated that ASOR needs to pay attention to non-white membership, but also not confuse general diversity with correcting specific racial disparity

Sharon noted that the current version of the Strategic Plan does not include anything specifically on women. Tiffany stated that while women have a vital role in ASOR, women are arguably not represented in the field, in terms of the professoriate and among field direction roles. She asked whether ASOR has advocacy role here.

Chuck called the meeting to close as it was 12:00.