

Minutes of the Spring 2009 ASTR Executive Committee Meeting Orrington Hotel, Evanston Illinois 4-5 April 2009

Present: Tracy Davis (President), Ric Knowles (Vice President), Wendy Arons (Secretary), Tobin Nellhaus (Treasurer), Nancy Erickson (Administrator, *ex officio*), Matt Omasta (GSC Representative), Daphne Lei, Ramón Rivera-Servera, Sandra Richards, Penny Farfan, Scott Magelssen, Harvey Young, James Harding, Patricia Ybarra, Brandi Catanese (arriving approximately 1 hour late, changing the number of voting members present from 13 to 14)

Absent: Karen Shimakawa, Andrew Sofer, Rebecca Schneider

SATURDAY 4 APRIL

The President called the meeting to order at 8:26 a.m., made introductions, and explained the agenda. The plan was to move through all the discussion topics on Saturday and establish budget priorities on Sunday; the goal of the meeting was to give directives to the Treasurer and Administrator so that they can work on the budget and have guidance about dealing with contingencies as they arise. Final approval of the budget will be done via email.

Reports from Officers & Administrator, with business arising

1. Secretary

a) **MOTION** to approve the Agenda. Moved by Nellhaus, seconded by Harvey. **The motion was unanimously approved: 13 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

b) **MOTION** to approve the Minutes of the Fall 2008 EC Minutes. Moved by Rivera-Servera, seconded by Lei. **The Minutes were unanimously approved with minor corrections: 13 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

c) **MOTION** to approve the election slate of names submitted by the Nominating Committee and prepared by the Secretary. Moved by Knowles, seconded by Ybarra. Harding noted that he had called Mike Sell's attention to the fact that his bio did not include publication information, and requested that we allow Sell to adjust his bio. The EC concurred. **The motion was unanimously approved: 13 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

d) **MOTION** to ratify the President's appointments to committees posted on the ASTR Web site. Moved by Nellhaus, seconded by Harding. **The motion was unanimously approved: 13 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

2. Administrator

a) **MOTION** to authorize the President to renew the Administrator's contract with the

beginning of the next fiscal year, with no changes from the previous year. Moved by Nellhaus, seconded by Knowles. **The motion was unanimously approved: 13 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

- The Administrator updated the EC on the elections: with the ballot now ratified she will send out ballots and allow thirty days for the election. Results should be announced by the end of May. The Secretary asked if the EC members standing for election to the Committee on Conferences should have their bios and photos included on the slate; there was consensus that this would be useful, and the first year EC cohort was advised to send bios and photos to the Secretary post haste so that the slate could be updated and sent out as soon as possible.

-The President displayed a chart tracking decline in membership numbers from 2007 into 2009. Membership has declined from 705 in March 07 to 580 in March 09. There is no ready explanation for this decline; conference registration in Fall 2008 was the highest ever, and high conference attendance usually correlates to higher membership. We anticipate lower attendance in Puerto Rico in 2009. This decline will affect revenue and budgeting.

-The Administrator suggested the following to address decreased member registration:

1) Just before sending out ballots, she can send out renewal forms to people who have not yet renewed, to let them know that they need to renew to be able to vote. With a month for the elections, there is time for lapsed members to re-register and vote.

2) We might approach Cambridge UP about marketing ASTR; this would benefit the press as well. This would perhaps help for summer renewals into 2010.

-Other suggestions came out of the discussion, including:

1) The website registration form is somewhat confusing; perhaps the website renewal is a barrier to registration, particularly for retired faculty who do not have internet access or are not as web-savvy. We can look into making the website more user-friendly, or sending postal renewals to retired/emeritus members.

2) We may want to poll those who have let their membership lapse to find out why, perhaps include this with the letter the Administrator will send to remind lapsed members to renew in order to vote.

3. Vice President

2009 San Juan Puerto Rico Conference

a) Vice-President Knowles asked for suggestions on the "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)" page he and the Program Chairs are preparing for the 2009 conference. The general membership does not seem to be getting the information that airfare to Puerto Rico will be comparable to other US cities. Treasurer Nellhaus suggested adding a sentence or link to the Working Group CFPs to direct potential registrants to the FAQ web page. President Davis advised that the FAQ should be sent out by the working group organizers with their acceptance notifications. Young suggested adding a list of sample airfares to San Juan from major cities as a sidebar to the FAQ page to illustrate the claim that fares are comparable to other cities.

2010 Seattle Conference (Joint ASTR/CORD conference)

a) Harding raised the question of the financial relationship between ASTR and CORD: How do we share revenues with CORD? What is the structure here? Treasurer Nellhaus explained that ASTR is the signatory to the hotel contract and is taking on the financial risk. The Administrator will need to craft a letter of agreement with CORD that will have to come back to the EC for electronic discussion and e-vote. The Treasurer and Administrator will appreciate the advice of the EC regarding negotiating that agreement, especially as regards the splitting of revenue and the amount and source of earnest money that will be put forward.

b) President Davis asked Vice-President Knowles to speak to the philosophy behind the joint conference. VP Knowles explained that he has been in regular contact with the officers of CORD and they are in agreement that it will be fully joint. They've agreed in principle to ASTR's programming format and the way we structure the conference; the programming committee will be jointly chaired and 50/50 ASTR/ CORD members. We have guaranteed them full partnership. The draft CFP is very exciting, and should be attractive to both sets of members. In general CORD conferences have somewhere between 100-200 registrants, but it is difficult to predict how many CORD members will attend because this will be a new meeting structure for their organization.

MOTION to hold the 2010 conference at the Renaissance Hotel in Seattle. Moved by Knowles, seconded by Rivera-Servera. **The motion was unanimously approved: 14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

MOTION to approve Nadine George-Graves (ASTR) and Anthea Kraut (CORD) as conference co-chairs for the 2010 ASTR/CORD Conference. Moved by Knowles, seconded by Farfan. **The motion was unanimously approved: 14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

MOTION to approve the conference theme of "Embodying Power: Work Over Time" for the 2010 ASTR/CORD Conference. Moved by Knowles, seconded by Farfan. **The motion was unanimously approved: 14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

-President Davis reminded the EC that a topic has to come up for discussion in the EC meeting in order to be eligible for a follow up electronic vote. She invited EC members to give feedback and commentary on the draft Call for Papers that was included in the VP Report so that it can be voted on electronically. Harding noted that one possible explanation for falling member numbers is an impression that conference themes aren't broad enough. Vice-President Knowles noted that the chairs were trying to make the CFP as inclusive as possible with regard to historical time period and national sites as well as construing dance and movement as broadly as possible. He reported that members of the conference committee felt that the call was very open and welcoming. Ybarra suggested that themes that do not seem "open" to senior scholars may appear very inviting to junior scholars, and that this might represent a field shift. A couple of concrete suggestions for changes to the CFP were made:

- 1) Change "theatre and dance" to "theatre, dance, and performance studies"
- 2) Foreground the broader topic at the beginning of the CFP, and move the first paragraph down.

- 3) The questions at the end are helpful for people looking to see how their work might "fit."
- 4) Encourage working group organizers to make their CFPs as broad and inclusive as possible.
- 5) Make even clearer in the description of working groups that working group topics do not have to fit the conference theme.

-Vice-President Knowles noted that the number of proposals for plenaries and working groups for the 2009 Conference in San Juan is the same as the 2008 Boston Conference.

2011 Conference

a) The Committee on conferences has made three suggestions for venues for the 2011 conference: Chicago, Denver, and Minneapolis. ASTR has never met in Denver, which makes it attractive; however, some EC members expressed concern over the cost of flights and convenience of flight times. While Chicago is easy to get to, ASTR has recently held the 50th Anniversary conference there; moreover, ATHE will be in Chicago in 2011. The last time ASTR was in Minneapolis was 1999. EC members suggested to the Vice-President that the Committee also consider Nashville, New Orleans, Minneapolis, Montreal, Philadelphia, and Washington DC (although many feared that DC would be too expensive). President Davis noted that a site proposal for 2011 needs to be voted on at our November meeting.

4. Treasurer

a) The Treasurer asked the EC to approve a proposal to redesignate a portion of already budgeted conference monies as the VP discretionary conference fund. The rationale behind this proposal is to give program chairs a clearer idea the amounts of money they have available so that they can plan further in advance. This proposal is a matter of operations, not policy; there is no change in the budget line, rather a change to the flow of input and a redesignation of the funds in line 855 as a discretionary fund, with oversight from the VP. There were no objections from the EC to this proposal.

MOTION: to approve the following policy with regard to conference budget emergencies:

"If circumstances during the ten days immediately preceding the conference indicate that conference will face cost overruns and/or probable revenue shortfalls totaling at least 8% of the conference budget, the Officers shall have the authority to reduce or cancel hospitality arrangements, audiovisual equipment provisions, support for EC members' hotel accommodations and/or other expenditures in order to balance the conference budget. The Officers shall make every effort to avoid reducing hotel accommodation support, and if such reductions are unavoidable they shall first ask for voluntary declinations of hotel room coverage. The Officers must notify Executive Committee members of their decisions before or during the EC meeting preceding the conference, but the decisions shall be solely at the Officers' discretion. If the 8% budget gap can clearly be predicted within 30 days of the conference, changes in the conference budget must be approved by the EC. The Officers' or EC's power to reduce conference expenditures within the stated periods shall overrule all other policies regarding conference expenditures."

Moved by Nellhaus, seconded by Knowles.

President Davis explained that officers discussed ways of reading metrics in months leading up to conference that might give warning well ahead of time to anticipate these kinds of emergencies. Treasurer Nellhaus noted that we have dealt with budget shortfalls ad hoc in past. We should have a policy structure in place for making such decisions (to cancel drinks, etc).

In discussion, EC members expressed concern about canceling, at the last minute, support for EC members' hotel or A/V equipment for presenters. To pull A/V after a proposal is accepted is problematic; to inform EC members that their hotel rooms may not be covered after they have booked non-cancelable flights also creates problems. A/V equipment can be a significant expense (up to \$9,000). Knowles noted the importance of prioritizing and giving guidance to the Treasurer and Administrator so that they do not need to make future decisions ad hoc.

Nellhaus withdrew the motion, and will reframe it and re-present it for electronic discussion and electronic vote. **Motion withdrawn.**

President Davis reminded the EC that electronic votes require 10 days to come to a decision, so we will want to vote on a policy before emergencies arise.

Standing Committees

5. Fellowships & Awards

Discussion of report from the Chair of the Fellowships and Awards committee

a) The Chair of the Fellowships and Awards Committee made two recommendations in her report:

- 1) We need to address systemic issue of low numbers of submissions;
- 2) We should not feel obliged to fund substandard submissions, particularly when there is only one proposal within a particular category.

The Chair also asked for guidance as to whether she should send out another call for proposals for awards with low numbers of submissions.

MOTION: To advise the Fellowships and Awards committee chair that for this year, if there is a minimum of one submission, the award should be decided on the basis of quality; if there are no submissions in a category, award should not given, and no deadlines extended. Moved by Omasta, seconded by Richards. **The motion was unanimously approved: 14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

b) Discussion turned to strategies for increasing numbers of applications for awards and fellowships. The following concrete suggestions came out of the EC discussion, to be taken

back to the Awards and Fellowships Chair:

- 1) Marshall and Keller award descriptions and deadlines should accompany the acceptance letters sent out by the program chair(s) and working group organizers, so that conference presenters know about this funding opportunity.
- 2) Advertise the awards at the PhD Conference Esther Kim Lee is organizing.
- 3) Change "Awards and Fellowships" to "Grants and Fellowships" to indicate that most of the funding opportunities are by application and not nomination.
- 4) Direct the Awards and Fellowships Chair to strategize with committee chairs on other ways to raise the visibility of the awards.

c) "Senior Scholars' Essay Prize": President Davis presented this item as an award category suggested by Mike Sell. The award might be conceived as a "pull" for senior scholars (more than 7 years post degree) to publish in *Theatre Survey*. This does not need to be a monetary award. The EC discussion centered on the following questions and comments:

- Why not just make it an "outstanding essay prize" and open it up to junior and senior scholars and to articles published in collections, too?
- How would we delimit eligible journals for this prize—do we generate a list of journals, or run the award as we do the Kahan, where we ask a select group of editors and journals to nominate essays, or do we limit this to essays published in *Theatre Survey*?
- Currently *Theatre Survey* only publishes about twelve articles per year, is this a large enough pool?
- Should we perhaps call it the "*Theatre Survey* Prize"?
- What do we want to accomplish with this prize—recognize *Theatre Survey* and encourage members to publish with the journal, or recognize established scholars' work?
- If the goal is to draw more good essays to the journal, perhaps it should include junior and senior scholars.
- Might we consider naming the prize after an influential/long-serving editor of *Theatre Survey* to make a connection to the journal itself; we could also put the *Theatre Survey* editors on the award committee? This might create conflict of interest if prize were for essays published in other venues; moreover, an editor's name may not indicate much to people who are not familiar with ASTR.
- What about language that specifies "preference given to articles published in *Theatre Survey*"? Some members felt that the honor was less outstanding the more it was limited.
- Many EC members were in favor of an open, "outstanding essay" prize, but others were attracted to the idea of an essay targeted to members more than seven years post-degree.

The EC agreed to send these suggestions and comments back to the Chair of the Fellowships and Awards Committee; President Davis will strike an ad hoc committee to consider the EC's feedback and return with a recommendation.

d) Proposal to change the title of the Keller Award to add the phrase “for untenured faculty”: President Davis explained that this is parallel to the change we made to Marshall grant to flag eligibility in the title of the award. EC members noted that the award is not targeted only to faculty, but to " untenured faculty, independent scholars, and adjuncts." The spirit of the proposal is not to change eligibility, but to indicate target awardees in title. Ybarra noted that many untenured faculty are not aware that this is a grant for which they are eligible; most of the applications for some time came from independent scholars and adjuncts. The information about this grant should go out with acceptance letters to plenary speakers and working group participants. Magelssen suggested the phrase "untenured degreed scholars." President Davis will send these deliberations back to the Chair of the Awards and Fellowships Committee for further consideration.

e) Sponsored Event proposal from Esther Kim Lee

The President explained that this is a category of award that comes to the EC for consideration. The EC decided to first consider whether there was support for the proposal in principle, and then to take up separately the level of funding that would be awarded.

MOTION: to endorse Lee's proposal for "The First Conference on Doctoral Programs in Theatre and Performance Studies at The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign." Moved by Young, seconded by Harding. After discussion of the merits of the proposal, Magelssen called the question. **The motion carried by majority vote: 11 yes, 1 no, 2 abstentions.**

MOTION: to fund this proposal at an amount up to \$500, the final amount to be determined after the EC consideration of budgetary priorities later in the meeting. Moved by Young, seconded by Lei. In discussion EC members stressed a desire to make any donation mutually beneficial, by giving ASTR visibility through a naming opportunity or some other means. Magelssen called the question. **The motion carried by majority vote: 11 yes, 1 no, 2 abstentions.**

6. Graduate Student Caucus

a) Defraying costs of attendance to the annual conference: GSC Representative Omasta highlighted some statistics from the GSC Report. Just over 50% of graduate student attendees received support from their institutions to attend the conference, and only a very small percentage (7%) received external support. The GSC is looking to expand opportunities for graduate student support for attendance at the conference; is this something we can prioritize? EC members floated a number of suggestions and comments:

-We have increased the number and amount of travel grants for graduate students, and are hoping that the new deadline, which comes after acceptance letters, will increase the number of applications.

-We are supporting the maximum amount of cost offsets through volunteer graduate student labor; there is consideration of supporting some other jobs, for example, Ambassador.

-A "thank you" letter to the funding institution might help to encourage more support?

Some members were skeptical that this would have any significant bearing on funding that is not available.

-Increasing the number of grants or reducing the cost of ASTR for graduate students would be most effective—perhaps giving first time graduate student presenters a reduced rate or their first year membership free? Some members expressed concern that the issue is not the conference fee or membership fee, but travel.

-The benefits of attending ASTR need to be highlighted, as a "career investment." It was noted that few institutions will fund a student for professional development, and that in the current job environment the fund outlay to attend the conference may not pay any return in the form of employment.

The EC agreed to refer this issue to a discussion between the GSC and the Committee on Conferences, with a charge to try to find revenue neutral solutions to this dilemma if possible.

b) Facebook: GSC Representative Omasta presented some facebook slides to give us a sense of what the facebook site looks like. Not all facebook members are ASTR members. There is a discussion board, where CFPs and other items of interest from sources like ASTR-L and ATHE-L can be posted. The main purpose of the site is to facilitate communication; the results have been mixed. It has been difficult to get a discussion started on dissertation & conferences, and there are not a lot of responses to many posts. The GSC will continue to work with it.

President Davis thanked GSC Representative Omasta and the other GSC leaders for their work in creating such a robust & well-run organization.

c) GSC addendum to the ASTR Handbook: The President and Secretary have given the GSC Representative feedback on the GSC handbook, most of which were minor corrections and suggestions. The major clarification involved specifying who is eligible to serve as a GSC officer or cabinet member of the GSC. GSC Representative Omasta has had all revisions approved by the GSC, but there was not time to circulate it for today's meeting. This will be an addendum to the ASTR Handbook, to facilitate future revisions. After today's discussion, the Secretary will circulate the revised addendum to the EC for adoption via an electronic vote. Any minor suggestions should be sent directly to GSC Representative Omasta.

d) GSC Silent Auction: GSC Representative Omasta announced that the GSC plans expand the silent auction in 2009 and make it last a bit longer; they will display the items as digital photos in a binder for several days before putting the physical items on display during the "live" silent auction. A longer time for bidding may raise more money.

The committee recessed for lunch at 1:10 and reconvened at 1:41.

7. Fellowships and Awards

a) New VP for Fellowships and Awards (proposal): President Davis ceded the chair to the Vice President because the proposal under discussion was hers. Vice-President Knowles explained that the rationale for the proposal is that the job of Chair of Fellowships and Awards is very big, there is financial responsibility that goes with the position, and because Awards are

an important topic of consideration for the EC it would be good to have the Awards Chair present at EC meetings. Davis noted that officers sign various indemnification certificates relating to fiduciary duties; given the large sum of money (\$28,300 in 2010) that the Awards Chair oversees, it seems important and prudent to bring this person in line with what other officers experience in terms of the organization's insurance, etc. Whether the position is a VP is open to consideration. The current VP has responsibility for the Committee on Conferences, but is also successor to the President if the President cannot serve for some reason; the current VP is consulted as an officer with awareness of whole organization. To have multiple VP's with various portfolios would require a reconsideration of structure of organization. An alternative would be to think about a portfolio for the Awards and Fellowships Chair that would not have the title of Vice President but would be at the officer level. Davis wanted the advice of the EC whether the idea is worth pursuing. A number of questions and concerns were raised in discussion:

- What would be the purview of this VP? Specifically overseeing the awards committees, or would this person be a voting member of the EC? Putting this person on the EC increases accountability; it also changes the governance structure of ASTR.
- Is the purpose to make this position an officer position, or to give the Awards Chair a seat at this table?
- This would change an appointed position to an elected position; we elect the President to appoint people who are competent and qualified. Can the election process produce the same kind of qualified person?
- What about the title "Director of Grants and Awards"? Recognition of the scope and significance of this job is important, and it has to be stated in terms that persons and promotions committees in institutions understand.
- We could consider designating a member from the current EC to hold this position; that would help with accountability. However, the Nominating Committee has priorities for finding people to stand for election to Member at Large positions which may or may not be congruent with qualifications for the Awards & Fellowships chair.
- It might be possible for the current VP to do both of these jobs; the VP's oversight of conferences is not a very big job. However, in a year in which conference planning runs into trouble, the VP might find that he/she has much more to do; moreover, the two work calendars overlap significantly.
- What about giving the current VP supervisory oversight to the Awards Chair? The issue, however, is only partially accountability; it's also about acknowledgment of workload. Home institutions are more likely to understand and reward the time and energy the Chair puts into the position if he/she is an officer of the organization.
- If this becomes an elected position, we may be making it more difficult to revisit some of the new awards put into place, because we are *de facto* institutionalizing them.
- Creating an officer with a specialized portfolio would be parallel to the positions of Secretary and Treasurer, both of whom have specific jobs but also weigh in on general issues.
- Are we creating an imbalance by recognizing the work of the Awards Chair in this way but not the Program Chair? There are some differences: Awards Chair has a much larger budget, and also generally serves a multi-year term.
- If Dorothy Chansky, the current Awards Chair, is elected to the EC, we can try out

having the Awards Chair as an EC member. But this does not address the question of increased recognition.

The EC agreed to ask the Officers to strike an ad hoc committee to take these comments and questions into account and continue to pursue this question.

8. Publications Committee

a) Update/feedback on ONEW: Our new Webmaster Jim Groom has ideas about ways to optimize the website; the EC offered no objections to authorizing him to explore such optimization. Groom has also asked for instruction regarding how he should consult the EC with respect to creative decisions—he does not want to make blanket decisions. There should be no budget implications in a redesign—it should be revenue neutral.

The EC agreed to strike an ad hoc committee to work on developing a new design for the skin of the website. Harding, Erickson, and Arons volunteered to serve on this committee; GSC Representative Omasta offered to find a GSC member to serve. The ad hoc committee will follow up to the EC via email.

b) Theatre Survey—implications for the budget in changing to tri-quarterly publication: We do not have enough information about the budget implications of the proposed change. Treasurer Nellhaus was instructed to work with Publications Committee Chair Susan Bennett and Robert Gleason to get enough information to help us determine if this move is financially feasible.

9. Fundraising Committee

a) Update: we've been successful in getting tax relief for Canadian donors, but this has not had a big impact on donations.

b) Suggested (new) strategies: some suggestions to date include--

- Appeal to junior faculty
- Appeal to previous award/fellowship winners
- Approach corporate donors
- Fundraise via Personally generated letter (i.e. From: Pres? Treasurer? To: ??)
- Report to early donors about how funds have been used.

Some suggestions came out of the EC discussion, including:

- Stress the importance of 100% participation by the EC and Fundraising Committee. This has been stressed; it has not yet been achieved.
- Make an appeal for contributions on the registration form for the conference. The easiest way to get people to contribute is to get them to check boxes in the process of doing something else.
- Ask universities to underwrite/sponsor a specific aspect of the conference, i.e. \$10,000 for A/V equipment.
- What about incentive gifts at various funding levels? This had been considered and rejected by the Fundraising Committee, which was cool to the idea of reinforcing brand

loyalty at a cost. Perhaps in-kind donations? Asking publishers or corporations to donate merchandise as incentive gifts? The President noted that we have had an offer of donation from SIU Press for the silent auction.

-Perhaps a home institution for ASTR—get a university to take on our administrative costs? Even many of the best-endowed universities are in a budget crunch, however.

-Use a meal with the President as an incentive for high tier donors—create a bond among high givers and between high givers and ASTR.

-Perhaps a professional development opportunity, along the lines of the workshop on fundraising Grossman offered, as an incentive for giving? Or a "benefit" speaker or performance at the conference or at a local theatre, where ticket sales become donations to ASTR?

-Specifying what a donation can do in concrete terms may incentivize giving.

10. Archives ad hoc committee

MOTION to approve the definition of "sensitive materials" as appears below and to specify that sensitive materials not be deposited in the archives at all:

Materials that are defined as “sensitive” (or with “limited access”):

- a. Anonymous readers’ reports.
- b. Records of submission to *Theatre Survey*, with the following exceptions: numbers of submissions, acceptance, and rejection without attribution to authors or reviewers.
- c. Any records of deliberations over awards or nominations.
- d. Any personal correspondence or materials outside of ASTR meetings that contain “private” knowledge, such as medical records.
- e. Any materials specified as “confidential” at the time of creation or acquisition.

Moved by Knowles, seconded by Richards. **The motion was unanimously approved: 14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

Other Business

11. Breakout sessions

(A) The first breakout session was aimed at finding ways to address potential budget deficits. The President assigned facilitators to discuss three areas of spending: Fellowships and Awards (Arons), Spring Meetings and Composition of the EC (Young), and Conferences (Knowles). The groups were charged with coming up with prioritized lists to guide further deliberations on budget cuts. The results of each group's deliberations were brought back to the full EC for review, and were taken into consideration at Sunday's budget discussion (see attached Addendum for notes from the Breakout Sessions).

(B) The second breakout session was aimed at addressing issues arising from reports submitted by the Nominating Committee, the Conference Committee, the Fundraising Committee, and the Cohort Reports. The President assigned facilitators to discuss four issues:

Preparing future officers (Lei), 2011 Conference Chairs and Themes (Harding), Fundraising in tough financial times (Catanese), and ASTR's role in advocacy (Rivera-Servera). The breakout groups were charged with brainstorming suggestions to be taken back to the respective committees. Each group reported back with a list of suggestions (see attached Addendum) that will be forwarded by the President back to the respective standing committees.

No other business pending for the day, a **MOTION** to adjourn was made by Rivera-Servera, seconded by Richards. The meeting adjourned at 4:48 pm, to be reconvened at 8:00 am on Sunday 5 April 2009.

SUNDAY MORNING

Absent: Harvey Young

Meeting called to order at 8:16 am.

12. Determine budget priorities and levels

The President presented the bottom line of the forecast budget for FY2010 as follows:

Revenue	\$150,000
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>\$171,000</u>
Deficit	\$ 21,000

The President charged the EC with finding \$21,000 in potential budget cuts to help the Treasurer make the necessary adjustments to the budget. The EC looked at the budgeting suggestions that came out of Saturday's breakout groups and agreed to the following budgeting cuts and priorities:

Fellowships and Awards

Targeted Research Award: cut by \$2,000 to \$2,000

Research Fellowships: cut by \$2,000 to \$4,000

Co-sponsored/ Visiting Scholar/ Domestic Exchange: cut by \$2,500 to \$2,500

Keller grant: award only one \$800 grant in 2010

Kahan and Hill Awards: cut to \$0

Total amount cut from budget by these measures: \$7,500

It was agreed that an announcement would be made at the AGM explaining the financial contingencies that required temporarily de-funding the Kahan and Hill awards and limiting the Keller to one award. The President will direct the Fellowships Chair to make sure only one Keller is awarded this year.

Executive Committee Costs

The EC agreed that if we experience the revenue shortfall that is currently forecast, other forms of meeting should be considered. More information needs to be gathered regarding the feasibility of virtual meetings. The EC agreed to the following action items and principles as a directive to the Treasurer:

- a) To strike an ad hoc committee to look into various virtual meeting formats and possibilities; this committee should investigate efficiency, cost, and the potential they provide for recording and/or archiving virtual meetings. Ad hoc committees that are already in place should start to experiment with any virtual meeting alternatives that are free.
- b) To consider holding an additional meeting at the Fall conference, on Saturday evening or Sunday morning, at which the new President might make the determination of which measures will be used for cost saving at the Spring meeting. The Conference Program Chair will need to be informed of this as a possibility as it impacts conference scheduling.
- c) In principle, cost saving decisions for the Spring Meeting should consider the following graduated levels of priority:
 - 1) Hold the Spring meeting at a University Campus (might save about \$2000).
 - 2) Reduce the number of EC members attending, or reduce the number of nights by holding the meeting Friday/Saturday.
 - 3) Move to virtual meeting for the Spring; this decision to be made in Fall once we have revenue figures (could save \$13,600).

Conferences

The EC agreed to cut the following conference expenses:

- Free drink (saves \$3,000)
- Professional photography (saves \$1,500)

It was also agreed that we should have, as a contingency measure, the ability to cancel or significantly reduce the cost of the lunch banquet in Seattle in 2010. The Administrator was asked to keep this contingency in mind as she negotiates that contract so that we are not committed to the lunch if we need to cut expenses further.

The President noted that if we are willing to make a sacrifice on the Spring meeting, we can keep the conference as it is, with the two exceptions noted above, and will have met our cost cutting goal.

13. EC and Program Chair Hotel Room Expense Policy

MOTION: To adopt the following policy with regards to EC hotel room accommodations:

"ASTR shall pay for (or in some other way provide) hotel room accommodations for Executive Committee members' and Program Chairs' meetings conference attendance according to the following policies:

- The qualifying hotel rooms will be standard class at a hotel designated by the Officers. The class of room may be improved if the hotel contract provides upgrades at no extra charge.
- Coverage is for the room plus applicable taxes and fees, but excludes meals and incidentals.
- EC members are encouraged to be as economical as possible on behalf of the organization.

1) Executive Committee Members:

a. Spring Meeting

For the spring meeting only, ASTR covers the hotel room for officers and EC members. The ASTR Administrator makes the room reservations. In addition, ASTR provides a travel allowance. \$300 is budgeted for each officer and EC member, and the amount is totaled and prorated for individuals based on economy fare costs.

b. Fall Meeting

- For the fall meeting, ASTR covers the cost of the extra night(s) in the hotel for officers and EC members. The Administrator makes the hotel reservation. Members are responsible for funding the rest of their stay and travel to the meeting, since it is contiguous with the conference. Home institutions will often contribute to the costs to support faculty who hold nationally elected positions.
- Executive Committee Members may decline coverage for hotel room charges.

2) Program Chairs:

- Program Chairs receive a minimum of three full nights. Typically the eligible nights will include the night preceding the conference. If the hotel contract includes complimentary rooms, then the Officers may increase the number of nights covered.
- Program Chairs may decline coverage for hotel room charges."

Moved by Nellhaus, seconded by Omasta. **The motion was unanimously approved: 13 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.**

14. Amount to be allocated to Co-sponsored Grant

The EC agreed to set the amount allocated to the co-sponsored grant award approved on Saturday at \$500, and delegated the President to negotiate with Lee to sponsor an event within the conference that will give ASTR maximum public relations attention.

15. MOTION to adjourn. Moved by Catanese, seconded by Richards. Meeting adjourned at 9:37 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Arons
Secretary

Addendum to the Minutes: Notes from the Breakout Sessions

Notes from Breakout Session A

i. Fellowships and awards

The breakout group felt that highest priority should go to awards for graduate students, then to awards aimed at supporting and generating new work, then to prizes to honor existing work; lowest priority went to awards for special events or collaborations. Listed schematically:

Highest priority: Dissertation (\$3k), Marshall (\$2.4k)

Next priority: "Generative Awards" (fund every year if possible, though possibly adjust number or amount of awards if needed) (listed in order of priority, high to low): Supplemental Research, Targeted Area Research, Research Fellow, Keller, Cohen, Publishing subvention (reducing amount of awards would provide variable savings, depending on amounts)

Next priority: "Celebratory Awards" (should be awarded as scheduled but amount may be adjusted down, including to \$0): Banes, Kahan, Hill (reducing these to \$0 would save \$1500)

Lowest priority: (may be suspended, if necessary): Cosponsored events, visiting scholars, domestic exchange (suspending these would save \$5000)

ii. Spring meetings/composition of EC

The breakout group presented the following list of cost-saving measures (in order of priority): Hold spring meeting at a university (free meeting rooms). [Note: this option enables the use of a cheaper caterer (either university or independent vendor)].

Optimize location of meeting space – in consideration of travel times, airfare costs, and availability of a hosting university. [Note: for the past 3 years, spring meeting was held in Chicago b/c 4 EC members live in Chicago].

Encourage EC members to double-up (room with one another). [Note: continue past practice of paying 100% single room and \$300 travel subsidy, upon request].

Bring a portable LCD projector to spring meeting (to save a/v rental cost of \$400).

Have EC cohorts rotate attendance at spring meeting (maybe 2 or 3 per cohort).

Hold virtual meetings (Skype). [Note: conference calls (by telephone) can be expensive.] Also, hold one, two-day annual EC meeting in the fall.

Other (related) ideas:

Schedule meeting in such a way that it only requires one night's lodging. Possibly... begin early on Friday and end mid-day on Saturday. [Note: this conflicts with ASTR

Officer's meeting]

Encourage a series of small group – 4 person – virtual/online discussions (in order to lessen the difficulty of a conference call with lots of members).

Have reduced EC attendance in spring...but invite them to participate via virtual/e-mail.

Schedule a virtual meeting in advance of face-to-face meeting to discuss/approve changes/amendments...as a way of optimizing meeting time in the spring.

iii. Conferences (Ric)

The breakout group presented the following list of potential cuts (in order of priority):

1. Eliminate free drinks (\$3K)
2. Eliminate professional photography costs (\$1.5K)
3. Cancel lunch on Saturday (\$15K)—could cut half and redirect other half to breakfast (\$7.5K)
4. Keep discretionary funding for conference chairs but maybe reduce the amount.
5. Keep a/v equip

Notes from Breakout Session B

i. Preparing Future Officers

Concrete suggestions that came out of the session included:

Look at former EC members and ask them to serve as officers. Make sure they know that being on the EC doesn't end their service. Tell them to keep in mind officer positions.

Watch for those who have been on a lot of committees, and who have chaired committees.

Look at what's going on in working groups. If individuals have the chops to organize a working group, they can be demonstrating competence appropriate for officership.

Get the EC/Officership to be thinking consistently about appropriate people to be their successors. Ask the nominating committee to consult with chairs of standing committees for suggestions for nominations.

New/mid-members of ASTR might need to know more about how to get on the slate. People don't understand the process, e.g., how to suggest their interest in serving, and to whom.

Prepping people/orienting people doesn't have to be the president's job. It can fall to previous cohort, for instance.

The President will forward the breakout session's notes to the Chair of the Nominating Committee.

ii. 2011 Conference Themes and Chairs

The breakout session produced the following list of suggested themes and chairs:

1. The Clandestine -- the secrets of theatre; theatre that's done secretly; passing performances (James Harding, plus co-chair?)
2. The Economies of Theatre (Nick Ridout? Mike Sell?)
3. Theatre and Crisis -- crisis as a time of opportunity (Janelle

- Reinelt? Tracy Davis? Linda Ben Zvi? David Roman?)
4. Theatre and Age -- childhood, aging, and everything in between-- (Manon Van de Water? Ric Knowles?)
 5. Performance across Cultures -- Diaspora (Ric Knowles? Sandra Richards?)
 6. Other names that came up as possible future program chairs: Andrew Sofer, Rebecca Schneider, Heather Nathans, Kate Kelly.

The President will forward the breakout session's notes to the Committee on Conferences.

iii. Fundraising in tough financial times

The breakout session reported back the following observations and suggestions:

- 1) Fundraising within ASTR feels distinct relative to other organizations: none of the members of our group could recall receiving appeals for donations from other professional organizations to which they belonged unless those appeals were targeted to specific causes, e.g. funding graduate student travel or conference attendance.
- 2) Therefore, the group wondered if a fundraising appeal that was more explicitly articulated in these concrete terms might have more resonance with the membership.
- 3) Additionally, might references to what concrete dollar amounts can accomplish make the appeal feel more urgent: at a time when many worthy organizations need money or they face immediate closure, how do we make ASTR's financial needs seem immediate (endowment doesn't seem to scream time-sensitive).
- 4) Articulating the benefits of donations in terms of immediate intellectual enrichment (funding new ideas, the presence of scholars at the conference) might be helpful.
- 5) Corporate support doesn't seem likely in this climate
- 6) Could we pursue other "angel" benefactors whose large-amount donations could have a greater impact on the endowment than members' individual, much smaller donations can?

The EC discussed the possibility of diversifying the goals of fundraising toward immediate goals rather than the environment; it is technically feasible and feasible in terms of policy but would reflect a shift in practice.

iv. ASTR's role in advocacy

The breakout group did not have any specific suggestions on this topic. The EC discussed the difference between 'advocacy' and 'activism'; membership and participation in NHA is advocacy, as is supporting TLA's efforts to preserve archival collections. Refusing to hold conferences in states with anti-sodomy laws is advocacy; so would taking into consideration the environmental or labor policies of a given hotel when choosing a conference venue.

Carbon offsets are another example of 'advocacy.' The president suggested that EC members bring up the issue among their ASTR network for feedback.