

## Survey Research Methods Section Business Meeting

Wednesday, August 11, 1999

Baltimore Maryland

### Minutes

Members Present: Bob Groves (Chair), Brenda Cox (Chair Elect), John Eltinge (Program Chair Elect), Sharon Lohr (Publications Officer), Keith Rust (Treasurer), Nat Schenker (Program Chair), Trena Ezzati-Rice (Newsletter Editor), Elizabeth Zell (Newsletter Editor), Mary Mulry (Chair, Standing Committee on ASA Fellows), and approximately 30 other members of the section.

#### 1. Agenda and Acknowledgements

Bob Groves (chair) opened the meeting at about 6:00PM, and distributed the agenda (attached), and introduced the members of the Executive Committee. Bob also recognized the efforts of Mary Mulry and her fellow members on the ASA Fellows Committee, and Barry Graubard, who has been the organizer of the section's ASA Continuing Education courses for the past several years. Bob Groves then noted that Marie Argana, the section's ASA staff liaison person will be retiring from ASA on 8/27/99, and thanked her for all her work on behalf of the section. Newly elected officers were also introduced: Dan Kasprzyk (Chair Elect 2000/ Chair 2001) and Bill Kalsbeek (Representative to the Council of Sections 2000-2002).

#### 2. Treasurer's Report

Keith Rust reviewed the current status of the financial accounts, as discussed in the July 1999 Section Newsletter and the minutes of the 8/9/99 Executive Committee meeting.

Discussion ensued as to how the section should develop plans for using the relatively large cash-on hand balance of \$60,000. There was consensus that much of this money this should be used to fund initiatives, and not just saved for unexpected contingencies. Some suggestions that were put forward by members were:

- Funding student travel to conferences and the annual meetings;
- Funding a research project;
- Continuing Education efforts, such as funding short courses that may risk having low enrollments;
- funding a competition for student paper, to be presented as a Topic (Special) Contributed Paper session at the annual meetings.

Members were asked to submit their views on these proposals to the executive committee, and to submit

alternative proposals.

### 3. Program Chairs' Reports

Nat Schenker reported that all has proceeded well for the 1999 program. He raised the issue of the timing permitted for discussants at Topic (Special) Contributed Paper sessions. At present a discussant is not required, but if there is a discussant he/she is limited to 10 minutes. The possibility of broadening the scope for discussants had been taken up at the meeting of the Committee on Meetings later in the week (Brenda Cox was in attendance), and the Committee had agreed to adopt this proposal for future years.

Judith Lessler presented a successful short course on Reducing Survey Error Through Research on the Cognitive and Decision Processes in Surveys. Members were asked to contact Barry Graubard with ideas for short courses for 2000.

John Eltinge reported that seven proposals have been fully prepared for invited sessions in 2000. Five will have guaranteed slots (up from four in 1999), with two to compete for open slots. John also reported that the Committee on Meetings will decide whether to continue to the Invited Poster sessions in future years (beyond 2000). John solicited Invited Poster session submissions for 2000.

Jim Lepkowski (Program Chair for 2001) solicited ideas for roundtable lunches in 2000, and invited paper sessions for 2001. The idea has also been proposed that the section members could contribute one or more Special Presentation Introductory Overview Lectures in 2001, and Jim sought suggestions and reactions.

### 4. Publications Officer's Report

Sharon Lohr reported that a new editor for the newsletter editor has been appointed. Eileen O'Brien from the US Census Bureau has agreed to take over the responsibilities from Trena Ezzati-Rice and Elizabeth Zell, who had previously announced their retirement. Bob Groves and the membership thanked Trena and Elizabeth for their work on the newsletter over the past few years.

Sharon reported that ASA now has a server for web space for sections. The plan is that the SRMS web site will be moved to the ASA site.

Sharon reported that the ASA is asking sections if they wish to publish proceedings electronically, and has asked SRMS to provide a trial of this. The electronic version would be web-based, not CD-ROM. Members asked who would have access, how user's would be charged, and what protection there would be for archiving. All of these issues have yet to be worked out with ASA. Sharon expressed the view that to produce both electronic and paper versions in the same year would very likely result in some financial loss. However, Sharon understands that funding from ASA may possibly be available during a transition period.

The members indicated cautious approval of plans to move ahead with investigating the issues involved with ASA. It was suggested that JSTORE should be investigated as a mechanism for archiving the proceedings

### 5. Council of Sections Representative's Report

Carol House reported that there is a proposal that ASA would approach editors of substantive journals, offering the assistance of ASA members as reviewers of articles in which statistical methods were referenced. ASA would develop a panel of members willing to carry out this work. The meeting expressed a consensus view that this concept was not well-formed at this stage.

Carol reported that the ASA has \$100,000 in discretionary funds for projects in 2000, and is seeking proposals, especially those that are tied to ASA's member initiatives. Proposals will be reviewed toward the end of 1999.

A proposal to add a Section on Nonparametric Statistics has been passed by the Council.

In future the Council of Sections will be reviewing individual section charters every three years on a rotating basis.

#### 6. SRMS Award Proposal

Bob Groves reported that the Executive Committee had voted to approve the proposal (attached), without amendment. There was some discussion as to the types of activities that would merit nomination for the award.

#### 7. Position of Secretary

Keith Rust reported that the Executive Committee had passed a motion (attached) to appoint a Secretary for 2000-2001. The section charter includes the position of secretary, distinct from Treasurer, but it appears that there has never been one. Brenda Cox will identify a candidate to fill the position of section secretary for 2000-2001. The executive committee will elect the secretary for this period. Dan Kasprzyk (chair-elect for 2000, chair for 2001, and current chair of the section's Nominations Committee) will prepare nominations for the position of treasurer for 2001-2002, but not for secretary, for the 2000 election.

#### 8. "What is a Survey?" Series

Fritz Scheuren reported that two more brochures are now available in the series ("Designing a Questionnaire" and "More About Telephone Surveys"). Three more are in the pipeline for the coming year. Fritz is investigating the possibility that these pamphlets could be integrated into a book, with some supplementary unifying material.

The meeting adjourned at about 7:30, at which point there was a mad scramble for the three remaining chips.

These minutes were prepared by Keith Rust. They were drafted on 9/3/99, and finalized on 4/13/2000.

ATTACHMENT

American Statistical Association

Section on Survey Research Methods

## Executive Committee Meeting

August 9, 1999

### Motion - Position of Secretary of the Section

Whereas

the Section Charter calls for an officer in the position of Secretary, distinct from the Treasurer or any other office, to be filled by election, to serve for a period of two years,

and whereas

the position of Secretary was not contested or filled during either of the two most recent annual elections, and is currently vacant,

and whereas

Article VIII of the Section charter provides a mechanism for filling a vacancy in the position of Secretary,

I hereby move that

1. The Section's Committee on Nominations shall submit one or more nominations for the position of Secretary, to serve for the period 1/1/2000 until 12/31/2001. The nominations shall be submitted at the Nominations Committee's earliest convenience, but no later than 10/31/1999.
2. As provided for by Article VIII of the charter, the Executive Committee shall elect a Secretary from among the nominees, such election to be completed no later than 11/30/1999.
3. In the future, the Nominations Committee shall nominate candidates for the position of Secretary in odd numbered years, and Treasurer in even numbered years, each position to be filled by election of the members to serve for a period of two years.
4. For the period 8/9/99 until 12/31/99, the duties of Secretary will be undertaken by the Treasurer.

Keith Rust

Treasurer