GUIDANCE FOR SECTION TREASURERS

Each year, each ASA section elects new officers. An overall Section Officers Handbook is available which describes the duties for each office. This handbook also recommends each section maintain a responsibilities and procedures manual and, if your section has one, this can be invaluable in guiding new officers.

Some sections have a Treasurer; some have a Secretary/Treasurer. Sometimes these are one-year terms, sometimes two years. In every calendar year, however, the ASA requests a section budget for the following calendar year be submitted to the Association in final by October 31. Note that these budgets are submitted on behalf of the section by the treasurer in office during that month of submission, but they apply to the following year’s treasurer’s term. It is important that section budgets be submitted in a timely fashion to assist coordination across the entire organization.

The budget, however, is not created in a vacuum. For any section over a year or two old, prior years’ financial statements and prior budgets are available for the treasurer to consult. The treasurer should plan with the section chair and chair-elect, and possibly others in the section leadership, to structure the expected revenues and expenses for the activities of the following year. S/he should take advantage of any section business meeting at the Joint Statistical Meetings (usually held in late July or August) to identify issues and get support for his/her input. Thus, planning in early summer by the treasurer is worthwhile.

Section solvency (ability to cover expenses) is one measure of section health so the treasurer should be cognizant of the section’s Cash On Hand (COH) at the end of each calendar year, as well as the anticipated expenses.

The following provides a timeline of activities that typically involve the treasurer, tips on using the available website tools, and suggestions for creating a budget.

**Timeline**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Throughout the year</td>
<td>Member renewals are received</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 1</td>
<td>New section officers are invested/installed</td>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>ASA contacts section officers to schedule JSM business meetings, food events (i.e., costs become available)</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 31</td>
<td>Previous year's financial statement becomes available</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 31</td>
<td>Deadline to reserve for JSM meetings, food events</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Section officers for the following calendar year are identified</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>Deadline to submit requests for ASA-cut checks for awards to present at JSM</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSM</td>
<td>Discussion of budget for the following year with section officers, current and future</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 10</td>
<td>Deadline to tell ASA any changed dues' schedule for the coming year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 30</td>
<td>ASA posts expenses from section meetings at JSM to current financial statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>Final budgets for the following year are due to ASA</td>
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Website Tools
There is a “ASA Leader HUB” page that is a starting point for all ASA volunteers:
https://community.amstat.org/asaleaderhub/home

The links of interest to you are under the Section Officers heading. Links with the green padlock graphic next to them indicate you will be prompted for your ASA username and password before being granted access to the page. Most of the secure links will take you to the Volunteer Tools area on the ASA website. Here you will find:

a) Section Member Reports: Such a report can display the number of members your section has or a list of the members as of the date you call the report up. It can be all members, or restricted to those who do not pay for section membership. Additionally, you can request lists of new members, people with expired section memberships who are still in ASA, and people with expired section memberships who are no longer in ASA for specific ranges of dates.

These are good tools for examining your section’s dues structure. For instance, do you give students reduced or free memberships? It can also help estimate your section’s revenue from dues.

b) Section Financial Statements/Expenses: Such a report starts on 01/01 of any year from 1999 forward, to a date that you specify. Be aware that the month-end balances are updated at the end of the subsequent month (e.g., August balances are displayed at the end of September). These can be shown as prose displays on screen or as Excel spreadsheets.

These statements permit you to identify what your section spends its funds on. Is there a trend of increasing Cash On Hand at the close of each year? Do expenses consistently exceed revenues? They also provide information for budget construction, including typical annual starting balances.

c) Budget Submission/Review: Prior Budgets are available for viewing from 2004 forward. These show the Beginning and Ending Cash On Hand for each calendar year in question, as well as the Net Surplus or Deficit, in addition to total revenues and expenses by line item. If your section also contributes to a conference account, those budgets may be found here as well. At the bottom of each budget there is space for comments. These comments can be helpful for the next year’s treasurer to understand the intent of each line item.

Is the section’s budget for the coming year less than half the Beginning Cash On Hand? If so, is your section saving for some particular purpose?

Note that these tools are NOT part of your section’s Community pages, although those postings may also be useful to you.

Create a Budget
Building a budget is about ensuring that the section is investing fully in its members. Do you have a mission statement for your section? Are you and your fellow Executive Committee members keeping
that in mind when you build your budget? Try to use the section’s money to make things better for your members and focus on ways to benefit your members.

Some questions to consider when developing a budget:
- Did line items on previous years’ budgets benefit members?
- Did the revenue of the section cover the expenses?
- How large of a balance does your section have?
- Do you anticipate any expenses in the coming year that were not included on previous budgets?
- Will any line items increase in the coming year compared to previous years (e.g., JSM reception costs)?

Below are some general areas that add value to members and where the section might consider budgeting some of its money:
- Meetings and Networking
- Continuing Education
- Support for Students, Young Researchers, New Statisticians
- Recognition and Awards
- Leadership Development and Mentoring
- Outreach - New Members, Outside ASA, etc.
- Furthering the Discipline

If a section struggles year-to-year to maintain a balanced budget and is continually losing money, the treasurer can help the section consider such things as increasing dues, obtaining a corporate sponsor for networking events, asking members to propose initiatives for funding, and seeing what other sections do to raise money.

If a section has a large balance (more than 2X your annual budget) that has been large for more than 3 years, it is probably time to consider some new initiatives to benefit your members. Consider spending 5-10% of the difference between COH and 2X your annual budget, in addition to what you usually spend. In this case, don’t be risk averse! Experiment and try some new initiatives. It might be that you want to start with one-time events rather than long-term commitments.

If your section has a lot of extra money, here are some ideas on ways you might spend it:
- Reduce dues or change dues structure (e.g. tiered structure) - especially if you continue to accumulate money.
- Sponsor a conference or course
- Invest in volunteers - fund a face-to-face leadership meeting? Honorariums for speakers?
- Offer free (or significantly reduced) memberships to students, new statisticians, or groups that are under-represented in your section.
- Perhaps offer to provide funds to ASA initiatives (e.g. the "House of Statistics", K-12 Initiatives).
- Support collaborative activities with other sections. Perhaps partner for initiatives with shared objectives - one provides cash and one provides volunteers.
- Consider spending and collaborating with Chapters.

As your budget is developed for the coming year, stay connected with ASA. Remember that it is the ASA that distributes the funds for the section, not the treasurer, so time must be allowed for the outlay. The ASA has support staff that can help with some section activities, and keep in mind the ASA
deadlines for budget planning. It is the treasurer's responsibility to ensure that the section submits the budget by the October 31st deadline.

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