GSS Executive Board Meeting Minutes  
Friday, August 7, 2020 – 11am EDT

Attending: Stephen Campbell, Will Cecere, Simone Gray, Elizabeth Mannshardt, Mike Messner, Emily Molfino, Tara Murphy, Jennifer Parker, Jenny Thompson

Regrets: Jenny Guarino, Kathi Irvine, Michael Yang

Next GSS Open Business Meeting: Tuesday, August 11th @ 12pm EDT  
Next GSS Board Meeting: Friday, September 4th @ 11am EDT

1. Administrative Items
   a. Next scheduled meetings
      i. Confirmed September 4th at 11am for board meeting
         1. Elizabeth will be unable to attend
      ii. Action Item: Jenny will send email on Monday as a reminder for Open Business Meeting on Tuesday
   b. Minutes/Action items from previous meeting
      i. Approve minutes
      ii. Discuss action items
      iii. Propose agenda topics for next meeting
         1. Several initiatives starting
         2. Newsletter
            a. Plan to send after next week’s open business meeting
         3. Fall Virtual Workshop Practicum
            a. Currently 2.5 confirmed presenters
            b. Action item: Jenny will send email to young professionals next week encouraging them to submit proposals
         4. 2021 Budget Review
         5. Any further COS Updates

2. Council of Section items (Jennifer P.) – see supplemental materials below minutes
   a. Jennifer P. will be sending around report from ASA Leadership with updates from Wendy and Rob Santos
   b. Leadership Workshop on September 29th via Zoom
      i. If Zoom is a problem platform, let Jennifer P. know
      ii. Workshop is for executive board and section representatives
      iii. Jennifer will send more details when she obtains more information and will provide updates during September meeting
   c. Budget due October 31
      i. Tara will report in September
      ii. No money spent in 2020 by GSS on data challenge because no professional category submissions, which GSS sponsors
   d. Annual section report due December 31
   e. Informational items:
      i. ASA doesn’t have information on diversity of ASA (race, ethnicity of members)
      ii. ASA took financial hit due to lack of in-person conferences
         1. Rob Santos is encouraging low cost initiatives
      iii. Sections took hits due to cancelled conferences, hoping to spend surplus in accounts
1. GSS doesn’t have this issues
   a. Underwriting ICES-VI, which was postponed to June 2021
   b. Sponsors Seasonal Adjustment Practitioners Workshop. This workshop is very inexpensive, as it has used the BLS conference center (free) in the past and offers limited refreshments (jointly paid for by GSS, BES, and WSS)
iv. Sections should consider more ways to collaborate with other sections
   1. One idea brought up during the COS meeting was sharing the mentoring initiative / collaborating with other sections who have the same idea
      a. Many sections brought up similar initiatives through all levels of career
   2. GSS awards co-sponsored with SSS:
      a. Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship
         i. SSS has two representatives
      b. Roger Herriot Award
         i. Went un-awarded in 2020 because of lack of committee; was not awarded in 2019 due to lack of nominations
      c. Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award
         i. Currently no chair for next year (see below)
   3. It would be very helpful for ASA to provide guidance on award committee formation and execution for collaborative section awards, as well as what awards are given plaques and where the plaques should be purchased (provide list of vendors used previously)
      a. Action item: Jennifer P. will bring this back to ASA
v. More systems needed to on-board officers
   1. Outgoing officers should be notified how to provide their replacement information to take over the role
   2. Videos being created for this
   3. More information given to Treasurers
vi. Section membership
   1. What are the benefits of section membership?
   2. Chapter membership has been found to be the most predictive characteristic of section membership
   3. Elizabeth suggested since section membership can be added at any point (not just during annual ASA membership renewal), GSS should add link to joining the section at the bottom of correspondence to general ASA members
vii. How effective are the section webinars?
   f. Any ideas how ASA can help the sections, let Jennifer know prior to the COS response meeting on August 17th
3. Newsletter progress
   a. Simone has all materials now
   b. Send out to GSS by August 17th
      i. Good to get out after open business meeting
4. Award Committees Participation by board members – let Jenny know if want to volunteer
   a. Roger Herriot Award
      i. There are some procedures written for this award
   b. Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award
      i. Bill Mockovak, current chair, is retiring and no other committee member wants to chair
      ii. This award has a really good procedures book
5. GSS Mentoring Committee updates
   a. Members: Mike Messner, Jennifer P., Will Cecere, Elizabeth
      i. Mike will ask during open business meeting for general members to be involved
         1. **Action item:** Prior to open business meeting, Mike will add a brief paragraph on GSS website homepage sharing “this is coming in the fall and here’s the contact if you want more information”
            a. Mike will also add a page under the GSS Mentoring page
         2. **Action item:** Add blurb to newsletter
   b. Ideally trying keep it really flexible to serve various needs for mentees
      i. Could be simple issue of authorship or ethics; could be for mentees looking for longer relationship
      ii. Letter will be sent out in the coming month for a call for mentors and mentees, highlighting flexibility of relationship that can be formed and flexibility of time commitment
      iii. Once participants list is received, committee will match mentees with mentors
      iv. Mentors don’t need to be senior level professionals
      v. Mid-level professionals can be mentees or mentors
      vi. Peer cohorts may also be designed, if there are odd numbers or to match individuals with others in the same stage of their careers
   c. All information is currently gathered through a Google site; would be helpful to move to an ASA site
   d. Tout it as being part of Rob Santos’s low cost initiative

6. GSS Virtual Roundtable Initiative
   a. Michael Y. has agreed to give his 2020 JSM roundtable in the fall
   b. Jenny has done a talk about how to publish a paper in a refereed journal and can give as a virtual roundtable
      i. Could co-sponsor (for free) with the committee on professional development
   c. Survey membership in early September about topics for roundtables
      i. Could target state and local government memberships to get their ideas
      ii. Could target other subgroups
      iii. **Action item:** Jenny will review membership and listed affiliations

7. How can GSS contribute to the dialogue on treatment of new statistical problems with official statistics/survey research methods due to the pandemic? (i.e., Statistical questions coming from pandemic [discussion topics for open business meeting])
   a. What methods have to change in order to accommodate this changing environment?

8. Open Business Meeting
   a. **Action item:** Review agenda by COB Monday and get back to Jenny
      i. Trying to keep to one hour

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**Officers**

*Chair:*  Jenny Thompson  
*Chair-Elect 2020:*  Michael Messner  
*Past Chair:*  Elizabeth Mannshardt  
*Secretary/Treasurer 2019-2020:*  Tara Murphy
COS Rep 2019-2021: Jennifer Parker
Program Chair 2020: Michael Yang
Program Chair-Elect 2020: Will Cecere
Publications Officer 2019-2020: Jenny Guarino
Discussion at the COS meeting on July 31 included the following:

- **Key Dates:** Leadership workshop is Sept. 29, Budgets are due Oct. 31, Annual Report (questionnaire) due Dec. 31.

- **Current demographics of ASA members.** There is little data, as many members do not provide this information.

- **ASA taking a financial hit.** Rob Santos emphasizing low cost initiatives.

- **Financial impact of cancelling conferences organized by sections.** Steve Porzio is the best contact, a great negotiator for the ASA.

- **Is Zoom is a viable platform for the Leadership workshop?** It seemed those with restrictions were still able to connect to Zoom (not initiate). Please check with all Section officers.

- **Consider collaboration with other Sections and with Chapters.** Co-sponsor sessions? Work together on conferences?

- **Request for help for systems for on-boarding new officers.** Looking for automated notification to outgoing officers to prompt them to provide necessary info to incoming officers. A smooth transition is important for all officers, vital for the section Chair.

- **The recent video about COS representation was well received.** A video is planned to be released in September that describes the responsibilities of Section Treasurer.

- **Describing the benefits of Section membership.** An opportunity to share among sections.

- **The COSGB is performing an analysis to identify characteristics of ASA members associated with section membership.** Preliminarily, the most predictive variable is Chapter membership.

- **Sections Reps mentioned initiatives on mentoring, with an emphasis on mentoring for all career stages; section committees targeting specific areas; new positions such as webinar chair.**

- **Noted that IGs are special in that members need not be members of ASA (chair must be an ASA member).** IG members who are not ASA members may benefit from membership if they are users of statistical methods, may not make sense otherwise.

- **Our Response meeting is August 17 at 1:00pm.**
ASA Activities and Initiatives - Summary for JSM 2020

• This is nowhere near a comprehensive list of all of activities, but it reflects some of our most recent work.
• ASA leadership operates in accordance with the ASA strategic plan. Presidents base their initiatives on the strategic plan, and on previous initiatives.
• ASA President Wendy Martinez started with three initiatives in 2020:
  o LGBTQ+ Inclusion
  o K-6 Statistics and Data Science
  o Holding a TEDx event in November 2020

Details on the first two initiatives are available in the President’s Column in the June issue of AMSTAT News (LGBTQ+) and the August issue (K-6). We summarize some of the highlights on these first two initiatives below. The TEDx initiative is on hold for this year. We planned an event for November to take place at the Urban Institutes in Washington, DC. However, we had to postpone it because of COVID-19. We are also working out some issues to gain approval from the TED organization.

LGBTQ+ Inclusion highlights:
• ASA Committee name change and new leadership – now the ASA LGBTQ+ Advocacy Committee
• ASA is now an Affiliate of the National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals, which led to a presentation opportunity to oSTEM conference.
• Working Group established and website under development
• Thanks to two anonymous donors, we were able to provide JSM registrations to 10 attendees from the LGBTQ+ and People of Color communities.
• Looking into developing Ally Training – all groups
• Project on Best Practices for establishing inclusive gender data collection standards – led by Stephen Perry (Cornell)

K-6 highlights:
• Develop games and apps to encourage children to develop data literacy skills – SPREAD THE WORD! This was extended to later in the fall.
• Curate existing resources to provide easy access – government and House of Statistics (http://houseofstatistics.org/)
• Extending the “data for good” theme with a focus on activities that engage students in human rights activities – potential effort with AAAS
• Conversations with Middle Schoolers – interviews with ASA President and ISI President by middle schoolers – thank you to Ji-Hyun Lee, John Bailer, and LaToya Jennings-Lopez! See the AMSTAT News Presidents Column for August to access the podcast.
• Build new collaborations with education-focused organizations, e.g, the Concord Consortium
• Harvard DS Review article on K-6 efforts – to be published in August or September.
• Possible ‘Develop Lesson Plans Competition’ with Stats + Stories

• 2020 ASA President Rob Santos is developing the following initiatives:
Building Community through membership development:
- Work with the Membership Committee and other ASA entities to assess:
  - the changing needs of our existing members, especially in these times of COVID; ultimate objective is enhanced benefits & value as well as membership retention in our new environment
  - the vast pool of statisticians & (potential) students in statistics related fields that can and should become ASA members (outreach to potential members)
  - what’s the value proposition for being an ASA member?
- Work with Membership Committee and other ASA entities to assess membership itself
  - What does it mean to be a member of ASA?
  - How can ASA promote community engagement among its members so that we can support each other better?
  - What outreach levers can be used to tap attract members

Building Community through advancing diversity, inclusion and equity: Support and follow through with the recommendations of the (upcoming) Anti-Racism Task Force. This TF is in the process of being created by Wendy. Rob is highly interested in supporting it and assisting in any way possible. He believes that its activities (including gathering feedback from members) and the roadmap that it will prepare are very much in line with my initiative theme of “building community”.
- Expect that this would include building pipelines for a diverse pool of students to attract them to careers in statistics (e.g., Statfests, Datafests)
- Expect this would include leadership building for students and early career statisticians via Chapters, Sections, Committees and more generally through volunteerism
- Rob does not see this “initiative” as requiring new infrastructure (e.g., a new committee)

Building Community through external outreach: Foster closer working relationships with the News and Science Media (journalists, newspaper editorial boards), scientific associations, and the federal statistical system, and state and local governments. Initiatives already exist in these areas so the idea is to further support them with an influx of resources and new ideas. This “initiative” should not require new infrastructure

- Kathy Ensor will be taking office in 2021 as ASA President-elect. Matilde Sanchez Kam will take office as Vice President. See the full election results here. President-elect candidates for the Spring 2021 election (to take office in 2022) are Dionne Price (FDA) and David Williamson (CDC). VP candidates will be David Banks (Duke U.) and Nick Horton (Amherst College).
- Nominations for the third International Prize in Statistics are due August 15.
- ASA’s advocacy efforts remain active. Just in the past two months ASA has issued four statements, two on the census and two related to covid-19:
• ASA Board issues Statement and Request on the June 23 Census Bureau Appointments, 6/24/20.
• Here are some of the other matters we are advocating for or monitoring:
  o NCES staff and budget issues
  o On-going concerns over Census citizenship information collection through administrative records
  o Greece’s persecution of its former chief statistician, Andreas Georgiou
  o Science integrity at EPA through communications regarding rule seen to undermine science informing regulations
  o 15-20% cuts in purchasing power for several federal statistical agencies
  o Publications issues at BJS
• For the twelfth consecutive year, we set a record for fundraising, thanks to Director of Development Amanda Malloy’s leadership and the generosity of members. Gifts totaling about $233,000 were received in 2019. We had 991 donors and 245 first time donors, also highs for us. Thank you to all who support ASA with their money and/or their time!
• The Board has met almost weekly since mid-April to address issues related to the pandemic and to the events following the murder of George Floyd. A couple of new ASA communities, the two aforementioned statements, and several other activities have resulted from these efforts.
• The Board approved an ASA Statement on Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI)
• ASA is actively involved in education at all levels, under the leadership of Director of Education Rebecca Nichols. Click here for more information. Of special interest is our Meeting within the Meeting program at JSM, which this year was conducted virtually during the week of July 20.
• We created the ASA Leader Hub, where ASA volunteers can find tools and materials all in one convenient location.
• We conducted our first virtual meeting in June. The Symposium on Statistics and Data Science, scheduled for Pittsburgh, was conducted entirely online. Of course, JSM is virtual, as will be our next several meetings (Biopharm, WSDS for certain at this point).
• We smoothly transitioned operations so that ASA staff members work remotely. For many weeks everyone worked from home. Almost everyone still does, but a few staff occasionally work in the building. Those who do are there voluntarily and work under strict guidelines for safety.