

**2015 Minutes of the Society of Early Americanists' Business Meeting
June 21, 2015**

**SEA-OIEAHC Joint Conference (Ninth Biennial Conference of the SEA), Chicago, Illinois,
June 18-22**

- SEA President Kristina Bross welcomed the attendees to our SEA business meeting, and congratulated Patrick Erben on election in February to the leadership team, as our new Executive Coordinator, Secretary, and Treasurer. For the 2015-2017 term, former EC Gordon Sayre will become Vice President of the SEA, and former VP Laura Stevens will serve as President of the Society.

- **Amendments**
 - Tamara Harvey presented the proposed amendments to the SEA Constitution and By-Laws (See **Appendix 1 and 2**).
 - There was no discussion of the amendments.
 - The Executive Coordinator will conduct an online vote on the amendments.

- **Executive Coordinator Report**
 - Gordon Sayre discussed the financial status of the SEA.
 - We are in the second year of receiving quarterly membership reports and dues payments through UNC Press.
 - This year, Gordon expects [less than usual] to come in from UNC Press; primarily, the current dip in members and membership dues was created by the lack of a membership requirement for the 2015 joint OIEAHC-SEA conference and should thus be temporary. Currently, the society has 325 members in good standing (dues current).
 - The executive committee will propose to UNC Press a dues increase and offering a 2-year membership to incentivize longer memberships.
 - Abram van Engen reported experiencing a problem using the membership feature on the UNC Press website; one of the improvements we could potentially make is leaving the PayPal feature on the UNC Press website and go to a different payment method.
 - Patrick Erben proposed doing a membership drive once we have worked out the new membership rates.

- **Affiliates Policy**
 - Kris Bross briefly discussed the new Affiliates Policy (**Appendix 3**).
 - We currently have affiliation requests from Legacy/SSAWW and SHARP; one of the goals of the new Affiliates Policy is to create parity between affiliates of various sizes.

- **New SEA Workshops and New Proposal Process for Topical Conferences**
 - Kris mentioned that so far, topical conferences have been proposed informally to the Executive Committee.

- Currently, the SEA has committed to two topical conferences, the 2016 “Translation and Transmission” Conference in College Park/U of Maryland as well as the 2018 “Politics and Religion” Conference in St. Louis/Washington University.
- Beyond that, new topical conferences will go through a formalized proposal process (**Appendix 4**).
- Also, since topical conferences have become larger, the SEA introduces a smaller format, annual SEA workshop.
- Currently, the SEA has committed to sponsoring two workshops: in 2016 at Dartmouth College (hosted by Ivy Schweitzer and Elizabeth Maddock Dillon) and 2017 at Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, Germany (hosted by Oliver Scheiding).
- Beyond that, new workshops will go through a formalized proposal process (**Appendix 4**).

- **International Scholarly Abstracts Project**
 - Kris updated the membership about a new project spearheaded by Oliver Scheiding in Mainz, Germany, to provide abstracts of early American scholarship published in the German language.
 - Once this project is working, we will branch out to other languages/countries.

- **Upcoming SEA Conferences**
 - Laura Stevens updated the membership about forthcoming SEA conferences, including the 2016 Topical Conference “Translation and Transmission” and the 2017 Biannual Conference in Tulsa, OK.
 - The 2017 Biannual Conference will be loosely organized around the topic of “the public.”
 - Laura mentioned receiving financial support from the University of Tulsa and a private donor.
 - Funds will be used primarily to sponsor local school teachers to attend the conference; specifically, the conference will include a workshop pairing scholars with school teachers.
 - Also, the conference program will include a field trip to the Cherokee Cultural Center, to the Tulsa Race Riot Memorial, and an event at the Gilcrease Museum of American History and Art in Tulsa.

- **SEA Chronological Range Issue**
 - The Executive Committee has received a proposal from the membership to extend the chronological range covered by the Society’s activities (such as panels/papers accepted for its conferences).
 - One possible model would include following the chronological range of *Early American Literature* (up to 1830).
 - The Executive Committee will conduct discussions among the membership during the next two years and potentially present a constitutional amendment to the 2017 business meeting.

APPENDIX 1

Proposed Amendments to SEA Constitution:

Constitution: <http://www.societyofearlyamericanists.org/constitution.html>

1.

Section IV Affiliations

Add to end: **“, and consider requests from smaller or more specialized organizations for affiliation with the Society of Early Americanists.”**

(This change would allow smaller societies to develop affiliations with the SEA, having dedicated panels at our biennial conference, in keeping with the recently instituted policy on SEA affiliations.)

2.

VI. Election of Officers

Delete “by mail ballot” from the phrase “every two years by mail ballot”.

(This change would give the Executive Coordinator the ability to conduct online elections).

3.

IX. Meetings.

Amend to read:

“The Society shall hold meetings annually to transact regular business, inform Society members of important news, and promote congenial relations among members present. The location of the annual meeting shall be determined by the President in consultation with the executive officers and announced at least one month in advance of the relevant meeting. When the Society holds a general conference the business meeting should take place at that conference.”

(This change would remove the requirement that the SEA hold its business meetings at the ALA Conference. The change would reconcile SEA rules with current practice, as we have not held a business meeting at the ALA Conference for several years.)

4.

Article X. Amendments

Amend this sentence:

“Any changes to the Constitution shall be made by mail ballot alone.”

To read:

“Any changes to the Constitution shall be made through a referendum election to be conducted by the Executive Coordinator...”

(As with the proposed amendment to Article VI, this change would give the Executive Coordinator the ability to conduct online elections).

5.

Article XI. Bylaws

Amend this phrase:

“If the Council of Officers so wishes, voting on emendations or changes of the bylaws shall take place by mail ballot, under the direction of the Executive Coordinator.”

To read:

“If the Council of Officers so wishes, voting on emendations or changes of the bylaws shall take place through a referendum election to be conducted by the Executive Coordinator”

(As with the proposed amendments to Articles VI and IX, this change would give the Executive Coordinator the ability to conduct online elections).

APPENDIX 2:

Proposed Amendment to the SEA Bylaws

Bylaws: <http://www.societyofearlyamericanists.org/bylaws.html>

I. Dues Structure

Add “part-time or adjunct faculty” to the list of categories of membership. The new language will read:

“scholars employed in academic or other professional institutions; graduate students, independent scholars; secondary school teachers, **part-time or adjunct faculty**, and staff at a historic site, museum, or library.”

(This will recognize and support the growing numbers of adjunct or part-time faculty in our field.)

Endorsing SEA members:

Tamara Harvey
Michelle Burnham
Lorrayne Carroll
Rosemary Guruswamy
Thomas Hallock
Sharon Harris
Edward Larkin
Dennis Moore
Jonathan Senchyne
David S. Shields
Zabelle Stodola

APPENDIX 3

Affiliates Policy

Society of Early Americanists Policy on Affiliate Organizations

The SEA seeks to establish and maintain affiliations with other scholarly organizations as a means of cultivating inter-disciplinary exchange and cooperation. Affiliate organizations shall be listed on the SEA website and in SEA biennial conference programs. In the programs, panels sponsored by affiliates will be so identified.

Affiliations shall be of three types: 1) affiliations from the SEA; 2) reciprocal affiliations; and 3) affiliations to the SEA.

In the first category, the SEA itself is an affiliate of the American Literature Association, as enshrined in the SEA constitution of 1992. The SEA sponsors at least one panel at the annual ALA conference, and may also hold business meetings at the ALA (as well as at its own yearly conferences). Likewise, the SEA is an affiliate of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS), and sponsors (two or three) panels at annual ASECS meetings. The SEA is also indirectly an affiliate of the Modern Language Association, inasmuch as the journal *Early American Literature* is linked to the MLA Divisional Executive Committee on American Literature to 1800 [soon to be renamed the “Forum on American Literature to 1800”], and the Divisional Executive Committee consults on appointments to the EAL editorial board.

In the second category, the SEA is affiliated with other scholarly organizations of roughly the same size and scope, and exchanges panels at one another’s annual or biennial conferences. Currently we have an affiliation with the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE).

In the third category, the SEA welcomes the affiliation of smaller or more specialized scholarly societies in the Early American field. These affiliate societies will sponsor dedicated panels at the SEA biennial conferences.

Affiliate Liaisons:

For an affiliation to function smoothly, it is essential to have a liaison, who is a member in good standing of both organizations, and can communicate with program committees and officers in each.

In the first category, the SEA shall designate a member in good standing to serve as liaison to the larger organization. The member shall attend the meeting of that organization, and coordinate or solicit proposals for the SEA-sponsored panel(s) at that meeting.

In the second category, a member in good standing of both organizations shall be jointly selected by the SEA and the affiliate as a liaison.

In the third category, the affiliate organization to the SEA shall designate a member who shall organize and/or chair panels sponsored by the organization at the SEA biennial meeting.

Designated Conference Panels:

In creating an affiliation to the SEA, or a reciprocal affiliation, the SEA commits to host a panel sponsored by the affiliate at the SEA biennial conference. This commitment does not extend to the “even-year” or thematic conferences nor to the smaller workshop events. Moreover, in the event that the SEA

jointly sponsors its biennial conference, as in 2015 with the Omohundro Institute for Early American History and Culture, the joint program committee shall be free to promulgate different policies for panel submissions.

The affiliate liaisons in categories 2) and 3) shall be responsible for circulating a CFP for an affiliate-sponsored panel, with title and format, selecting the presenters, and submitting materials to the SEA conference program committee by the proposal deadline. These panels should be complete with three or more participants, and all participants will have to be SEA members and pay conference registration fees. For reciprocal affiliations, the SEA expects the affiliate organization to extend the same courtesy of a dedicated panel, to the SEA, and to recognize the SEA liaison's role in organizing and submitting this panel.

Apart from ongoing affiliate relationships, conference panel proposals may be submitted by a journal editor or officer of a scholarly or historical society, for a panel sponsored by that entity, at a particular conference.

List of Current Liaisons:

ALA: Duncan Faherty

ASECS: Joy Howard

ASLE: Lauren LaFauci

To request Affiliate status: To commence a new affiliation, the President of the requesting organization should submit the following materials, ideally electronically, to the SEA leadership:

- a brief rationale for why the organization is seeking affiliate status, including the mutual areas of interests of SEA and the requesting organization;
- a brief overview of the organization, including the number of current members, date founded, website address, sponsored publications (such as a newsletter or journal), and any other affiliated organizations;
- the name, contact information, and proposed term length (minimum two years) of the affiliate liaison. This liaison will correspond with the SEA on all matters regarding the affiliation, including announcing CFPs, confirming conference participation, (as outlined above) and requesting affiliate renewal.

Review of Affiliate status: For organizations wishing to initiate affiliate status with SEA: your request will be evaluated by the Executive Coordinator, Vice-President, and President, and notification of affiliate status will be returned within a month.

For organizations already affiliated with the SEA, the affiliation will be reviewed every six years. Organizations that are due to be reviewed will be notified at least six months in advance and may be asked to submit the following materials electronically:

- a brief description and analysis of the organization's activities since the last review,
- name, contact information, and proposed term length (minimum two years) of the affiliate liaison,
- figures documenting the stability or growth of its membership, and

- a summary of the organization’s presence and activities at SEA conferences, including title(s) of panels, number of presenters, and any other relevant materials.

Affiliate renewals will be evaluated by the Executive Coordinator, Vice-President, and President, and notification of affiliate status will be returned within a month.

APPENDIX 4

Society of Early Americanists: Grants for Topical Conferences and Workshops

The Society of Early Americanists welcomes applications for seed grants to support biennial topical conferences (usually to take place in the spring or summer of even-numbered years) and workshops (to take place annually, usually in the fall).

SEA Workshops

Description: SEA-sponsored workshops are designed to be narrowly focused, small (25-75 participants), collaborative, with innovative formats. More so than the biennial or the topical meetings, SEA Workshops aim to be a stepping stone to concrete results: publications, editions, websites, exhibitions, guides or other “products” related to the field of early American studies.

Process: Members in good standing who wish to propose a workshop will submit the following information to the SEA president.

- Description of the workshop. This statement should include the topic of the workshop, the rationale for the workshop and for its sponsorship by the SEA, the process by which participants will be selected, a succinct statement of the credentials of the chair(s) and host institution and a description of the proposed outcomes. This statement should be no more than 1,000 words.
- Budget: this document should include estimated expenses and resources for meeting them. If possible, an institutional statement of support should be included as an appendix.

Timing: The SEA will sponsor one workshop a year. Unlike our biennial and topical meetings, workshops may be held at any time during the year, though workshops may not compete with our larger conferences. The preference of the SEA is that the workshop be held in the fall.

SEA Support: The SEA will provide \$1,000 as a seed grant, which may be used for any budgeted expense except for salary supplements for the chair(s) of the workshop. Possible uses include travel, lodging, or honoraria for keynote speakers, subsidies for registration, travel grants, and the Executive Committee is happy to consider other uses.

The SEA will publicize the workshop on our website, listserv and social media. The SEA will also make its mailing list available to the workshop coordinators.

SEA Acknowledgment: Workshops will appropriately list the SEA as a sponsor in announcements about the event and in the program.

Financial arrangements: The \$1,000 seed grant will be deposited in an institutional account designated by the workshop chair(s), who will have discretion over its use. Should the workshop be cancelled, the host institution will return the seed grant to the SEA. If the workshop experiences a budget surplus or a budget shortfall, the responsibility for the funds belongs to the chair(s) and/or host institution.

Reporting: Within three months of the conclusion of the workshop, the chair(s) will submit a brief report (no more than 1000 words) to the SEA President, describing the meeting and providing an overview of expenditures.

Timing and Evaluation of Proposals: Workshop calls for proposals will have a two-year cycle. Calls for workshop proposals will be issued in September of each year with a due date in early October in order to plan for workshops to be held approximately two years from the proposal due date. Organizers will be notified in December about the status of proposals. The first open call for workshop proposals will be for a workshop to be held in the fall of 2018.

Proposals for workshops will be evaluated by the Executive Council of the SEA, in consultation with the advisory committee and any SEA members the president appoints. Judges directly involved in any of the conferences recuse themselves from deliberations. Successful proposals will make clear the rationale for the workshop topic, have a clear plan for a follow up to the workshop, and demonstrate sufficient institutional support for a successful meeting.

SEA Topical Conferences

Description: The topical conferences are distinct from the SEA Workshops by their size (up to approximately 150 participants) and from the SEA biennial conferences in that they are focused on a particular topic or theme (examples in recent years have included the Ibero-Anglo Summits and “London and the Americas”). Topical conferences are designed to allow participants to explore in more detail a particular topic in early American studies, though this topic should have fairly broad appeal and cut across the disciplines of our field.

Process: Members in good standing who wish to propose a topical conference will submit the following information to the SEA President.

- Description of the topic. This statement should include a rationale for the conference and for its sponsorship by the SEA, and a succinct statement of the credentials of the chair(s) and host institution. This statement should be no more than 750 words.
- Draft Call for Papers
- Budget: this document should include estimated expenses and resources for meeting them.
- Institutional statement of support in the form of a letter from chair(s) department, college, or university. If the proposed meeting will not be held at a college, university or other research center, a description of how the conference logistics will be met should be included.

Timing: topical conferences will meet in the spring or early summer, in years alternating with the general, biennial conference.

SEA Support: The SEA will provide \$2,000 as a seed grant to help with recruiting keynote speakers, helping with publicity, registration, travel grants, etc. The seed grant can be used for any budgeted expense except for salary supplements for the chair(s) of the conference.

The SEA will publicize the conference on our website, listserv and social media. The SEA will make its mailing list available to the conference coordinators.

SEA Acknowledgment: Conferences will appropriately list the SEA as a sponsor in announcements about the event and in the program.

Financial arrangements: The \$2,000 seed grant will be deposited in an institutional account designated by the workshop chair(s), who will have discretion over its use. Should the workshop be cancelled, the host institution will return the seed grant to the SEA. If the workshop experiences a budget surplus or a budget shortfall, the responsibility for the funds belongs to the chair(s) and/or host institution.

Reporting: Within three months of the conclusion of the conference, the chair(s) will submit a brief report (no more than 1,000 words) to the SEA President, describing the meeting and providing an overview of expenditures.

Timing and Evaluation of Proposals: Conference calls for proposals will have a 2.5-year cycle. Calls for workshop proposals will be issued in September of each year with a due date in early October in order to plan for conferences to be held approximately 2.5 years from the proposal due date. Organizers will be notified in December about the status of proposals. The first open call for proposals will be for a topical conference to be held in the spring or summer of 2020.

Proposals for topical conferences will be evaluated by the Executive Council of the SEA, in consultation with the advisory committee and any SEA members the president appoints. Judges directly involved in any of the conferences recuse themselves from deliberations. Successful proposals will concern topics of broad and/or cutting-edge issues and will demonstrate sufficient institutional support for a successful meeting.