To: Executive Board  
From: Sally Merry, Chair CSC until Nov. 2008  
Date: Jan 30, 2009  

Annual Report of the Committee on Scientific Communication  

The committee had a very busy year focused mostly on publications issues. It worked to implement the new Wiley Blackwell publishing arrangement, focusing in particular on working out the specific features of section publishing under the new system and developing procedures that are transparent and consultative. We carried out consultations with section leadership as we developed these procedures. The committee worked closely with CFPEP, which played a critical role in developing these procedures and the consultative process.

Major areas of activity:

1. Appointment of a new editor for the American Anthropologist. After considering applications and interviewing candidates at the 2007 annual meeting, the CSC appointed Tom Boellstorff for a full-term editorship of American Anthropologist. The official terms runs from September 1, 2008-September 1, 2012. The committee supported his plan to move to a double-blind peer review process. It also approved his request to include international members on the editorial board and in the review process.

2. The committee supported eliminating the *American Anthropologist* manuscript processing fee for non-members of AAA on the grounds that it is prohibitive to international scholars and has not proven to be a significant source of revenue.

3. The committee acted on the recommendation of CFPEP to approve a new allocation formula for the length of the Wiley-Blackwell agreement (end of 2012).

4. The committee developed a mechanism for sections to apply for changes to the specifications of their publications. Changes in such as page length budgets, format, and covers are made on an annual basis through a process of submission of requests to the director of publishing at AAA and Wiley-Blackwell followed by consideration by a committee made up of Executive Board and section members, called the Specifications Advisory Committee. This committee is made up of two EB representatives - the chair of CSC and the Treasurer - and three representatives of the Section Assembly named by Section Assembly leadership and approved by the EB. Decisions are made available on the AAA website. This process was developed through a process of discussion with section leadership contacted through the section leadership listserv and in a conference call discussion.
4. The CSC also developed a set of guidelines for the process by which a new serial can be included in the Wiley Blackwell agreement. Sections that wish to start a new journal need to develop a track record of publication before they can be considered for inclusion. This process was again developed through consultation with section leadership. The specific guidelines were approved by the EB.

5. The CSC approved Wiley Blackwell’s new sales and pricing scheme for AAA publications.

6. The CSC approved new guidelines for the AA for self-disclosure of funding support for the research published in the journal and encouraged other journals to consider adding similar guidelines.

7. The development of Anthrosource into a member benefit opens up the possibility of new forms of communication and networking in the site. The CSC is working with Dion Dears as he seeks to develop its possibilities for members.

8. In an effort to increase open access to AAA publications, the CSC approved CFPEP’s plan to make available for free, i.e., to “ungate,” the *American Anthropologist* 35 years and longer after publication. Section journals were encouraged to follow the same plan, and several agreed. CSC asked CFPEP to assess the success and costs of this arrangement in Sept. 2009.

9. CSC accepted the AOC’s report on its last five years and encouraged it to specify its process of monitoring the continuing eligibility and membership numbers of sections in the interest of transparency and to communicate this process to the Section Assembly Executive Committee.

Future issues:

1. The CSC will continue to monitor the publications arrangement with Wiley Blackwell to ensure that it remains participatory and supportive of the twin goals of maintaining a sustainable publishing program and maximizing the diversity of the field through supporting all its publications. It recognizes the disparities in profitability of the journals but is committed to maintaining all of them. Although there were some problems in early 2008, by the end of the year the process was generally running smoothly.

2. CFPEP produced a section liaison report that examines the views of section leadership towards the publication program. CSC was appreciative of this report and will continue to work with CFPEP to respond to section concerns.
3. Annual meeting location choices will take into account the report of the Labor Relations Committee.

4. CSC will consider the recommendations of the A and E section for greening the annual meeting.

5. It will consider changing its name to reflect more accurately its role in producing anthropological knowledge.