At the 2009 spring meeting, the ACC and the EB voted to re-name the Committee on Scientific Communications (CSC) the Anthropological Communications Committee (ACC). This report will cover periods of work undertaken under both committee names. In 2008, the committee (then the CSC) had completed work on several major obligations, particularly those related to the transition to the Wiley-Blackwell publishing agreement, and much of the ACC’s charge in 2009 was to follow up on these decisions and continue to implement them.

Journals

In his second year as Editor-in-Chief of *American Anthropologist*, Tom Boellstorff has continued to implement creative changes to the journal. He has initiated several new features, including the “From the Editor” and “Year in Review” pieces and has achieved considerable success in his efforts to streamline the workflow and manuscript production process. He also put forward two design changes to the journal—first external and in 2009 internal—that improve its appearance and readability. The ACC recommended that he consider developing a system for facilitating access to materials that supplement journal articles (e.g., links to audio and video materials). His efforts to add a “For Further Reading” link to printed articles moves in a direction the ACC hopes to continue.

In an effort to maintain income at a time when many libraries are seeking to institute economies in journal subscriptions, at the spring 2009 meeting the ACC voted to freeze AAA journal prices for 2010. The ACC will assess the impact of this decision on subscription revenue at the spring 2010 meeting.

Specifications Change Request Procedures

The ACC also voted to extend the Specifications Change Request Procedure Review process initiated in 2008 through the 2012 fiscal year. This process creates a mechanism by which each AAA journal that wishes to implement a change (e.g., page numbers, design, color) must submit a proposal to a committee consisting of the members of the ACC and a committee appointed from a list of nominations offered by the Section Assembly. In 2008 and 2009, this procedure seemed to operate very smoothly, both in terms of negotiating among possibly competing requests by the various journals, and in terms of the AAA’s relationship with Wiley-Blackwell. ACC members noted that Wiley-Blackwell’s responses to requests were, overall, reasonable, and the existence of a committee drawn from the SA seemed to reassure journal editors that the process was fair and impartial. At the December meeting, the ACC moved to continue this process and to appoint to serve on the Specifications Advisory Committee for the 2011 and 2012 budget years the following candidates: Tom Boellstorff, Cathy Costin, and Hillary Webb.
New special publication

At the December meeting, the ACC also moved to accept a proposal submitted by Oona Schmid and Jason Miller for a new AAA special publication, *How to Get Published*. ACC members suggested some revisions but overall approved of this initiative. The volume would target an audience of anthropology students and young professionals. The first section of the volume will consist of chapters that offer step-by-step guidelines for producing particular kinds of publications and academic products—e.g., conference presentations, journal articles, monographs, and new media applications. The second section will focus on the challenges and requirements associated with each of the subfields. A final section will address matters of copyright and collaboration. Oona and Jason were authorized by the ACC to move ahead with the process of recruiting authors for the various sections. It has not been decided whether Oona and Jason will seek publication through Wiley-Blackwell or elsewhere.

Evaluating the Wiley-Blackwell partnership

As the AAA publications continue to adjust to working with Wiley-Blackwell, the ACC moved to request CFPEP to gather information from editors of AAA publications to illuminate their qualitative experience working with Wiley-Blackwell. ACC seeks to have this completed by April 2010 for discussion at its spring meeting.

“Greening” the AAA

The ACC initiated work on the larger project of “greening” the AAA meetings and the AAA itself. Over the year, ACC members agreed that “greening” is a complicated process that requires attention to ways in which seeming energy economies might sometimes generate higher energy use of some other kind. Two other challenges to making both the meetings and the Association more energy-efficient are cost and membership resistance. For example, issuing flash drives to members instead of printed programs may appear to generate major energy economies, but the AAA must take into account the per unit cost of the flash drives, whether members will then do their own printing, at a possibly higher final energy cost, whether members are willing to forego the familiar printed program, and whether all members have laptops or other compact devices that they can use with flash drives. This year’s experiment that offered the option to assemble a customized program for individuals through the AAA website appeared to be popular, and may show the way toward future energy savings.

Based on a report submitted by the Anthropology and Environment section, the ACC generated a suite of recommendations that can be used to enhance energy efficiencies at the annual meeting. These include guidelines for the hotels and convention centers where the AAA meets and specific recommendations that can be provided to members as they plan their trips. ACC also discussed whether meeting abstracts could be made available online. Committee members noted that due to the long lead time between decision making on environmental matters and the actual meetings, it is likely that hotels and convention centers will be in compliance by the time a meeting actually occurs.
Recommendations for making AAA operations more energy-efficient will be made at a later time, after the implementation of the new computer systems that will be used to manage all aspects of AAA operations.

Other decisions

Wiley-Blackwell invited the AAA to participate in a project they intend to launch to develop an on-line Anthropology Reference Core and an on-line Anthropology Encyclopedia. The ACC was concerned that involvement in such a partnership might have a deleterious effect on our publications program. The possible impact of the project on AAA staff time was not clearly defined; indeed, the proposal indicated that the project would require considerable organizational work by our staff. Further, the ACC questioned the intellectual merit of the proposal, particularly in terms of concerns that such a venture would tend to codify key issues rather than foster debate. We thanked Wiley-Blackwell for its offer to work with us on this venture, but respectfully declined.

Brainstorming

At the spring meeting, Charles Briggs suggested that the ACC would be well-served by allowing more time than has currently been allocated for a free-form “brainstorming” session on publishing ideas. The November/December meeting is too tightly scripted to permit this sort of activity, but the ACC recommends organizing its spring agenda for 2010 so as to facilitate open discussion.

Editors’ request for travel support

At the spring meeting, the ACC received a joint request from the majority of AAA journal editors for enhanced travel support for attendance at the AAA annual meeting. Since the various journals are published by sections that differ greatly in terms of size and financial resources, the ACC passed a new policy by which the AAA will match up to $200 of travel subsidies provided by sections for their editors to attend the annual meeting. This policy will be instituted on an experimental basis for the 2009 meetings, and its efficacy and practicality will be assessed at the 2010 spring meeting. These funds will be deducted “off the top” from the July payment from Wiley-Blackwell before applying the allocation formula to the disbursement of Wiley-Blackwell funds.