AOC 2010 Annual Report

Katherine A. Spielmann, Out-going Chair, and Florence Babb, In-coming Chair AOC
February 10, 2010

A. 2010 Activities

I. AAA officers

The AAA President requested a change in the title of “president-elect” to “vice president and president-elect” in order to convey the fact that the AAA president-elect has a number of responsibilities and tasks. The AOC supported the title change; the EB passed this motion. It now requires a bylaws change.

II. AAA Committees

Committee on Practicing Applied, and Public Interest Anthropology (CoPAPIA): The AOC approved their request to add a student member, and also recommended that a non-profit person be included in CoPAPIA’s membership.

Committee on Minority Issues in Anthropology: See discussion under section III. AAA Commissions.

Annual Reports

The AOC reviewed all the annual reports from the AAA committees, which seem to be functioning well. We made a few recommendations with regard to specific requests from the COPP and COE.

Five Year Committee reports

The AOC reviewed and discussed five-year reports from the following committees:

Anthropology Education Committee: The AOC decided to recommend that the AEC not be reauthorized and that instead an Education Taskforce be created to collect data and produce a report that suggests specific actions and policy changes that need to be taken to improve the teaching of Anthropology in different settings. Such a Taskforce has been established.

Committee on the Status of Women in Anthropology: The AOC reviewed COSWA’s report and concurred with the suggestion that they change their name to Committee on Gender Equity in Anthropology and expand their charge accordingly, without losing site of the original focus on the status of women. The AOC made a motion to the Executive Board that was approved.
III. AAA Commissions

Commission on the Engagement of Anthropology with the US Security and Intelligence Communities: With the completion of CEAUSSIC, and their lack of interest in being re-authorized there is still a perceived need for the AAA to address issues regarding the actions of the US military and intelligence arenas. The AOC recommended that the President establish a Rapid Response Team to assist the president of the AAA in engaging with future military and intelligence issues. Such a group has been established.

Commission on World Anthropology: The AOC recommended that the Commission on World Anthropology, which came to a close, become a standing Committee on World Anthropologies. The AOC made a motion to the Executive Board that was approved. The AOC then refined the charge for this new committee, which has now been established.

Commission on Race and Racism in Anthropology: The AOC accepted and reviewed the CRRA’s final report, which was both very informative and discouraging. The report had also been circulated to the CMIA. We concurred with the CMIA’s interest in engaging minoritization more broadly than race and racism, and recommended that the CMIA should be larger than the current membership of 7, and instead be 11. This size would allow for the creation of around three subcommittees which would be tasked with addressing issues of specific minority constituencies, whether of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and/or class. We recommended that the committee be hybrid, containing both appointed and elected members.

A subcommittee of the AOC (Babb, Miller, Vargas-Centina, Santiago-Irizarry) is working to craft a recommendation for a specific charge for the CMIA that will be circulated to members of the former Commission as well as the current CMIA before a final version is forwarded to the EB.

IV. AAA Sections and Interest Groups

The AOC reviewed, discussed, and approved requests to reauthorize the following interest groups:

- Anthropology of Children and Childhood
- Human Sexuality and Anthropology
- Anthropology of Public Policy

At the request of the SAEC, the AOC de-authorized the Scholarly Communications Interest Group.

Policies and Procedures for the Creation of a New Section were reviewed and slightly modified to clarify the order in which groups review requests and to clarify that the AOC is the board committee charged with overseeing sections and making section specific recommendations to the Executive Board.
V. Retiree dues rates

In response to AAA retiree members’ requests to reduce their dues rate, the AOC reviewed options prepared by staff which included 1) reducing the dues for the entire lower tier of income rates, 2) revising retiree rates only, and 3) charge a flat fee to retirees. We recommended to the EB that the student dues structure be followed for retirees, and that a full review of the AAA dues structure be undertaken in 2011.

VI. External relations of the AAA

The AOC undertook a lengthy discussion concerning the creation of a formal affiliate organization category, including what such a category would entail and what the benefits would be for AAA members and the Association.

Prior to our discussion, Bill Davis had collected information on what kinds of formal affiliations other academic associations have created. He provided this information in a memo to the AOC. Ultimately, AOC members thought it more likely that coalition-building on a case-by-case basis would be productive. AOC members noted that without a clear example of an association interested in an affiliate relationship with the AAA or vice versa, it was probably unwise to develop an overarching procedure for creating formal affiliates.

VII. “What is Anthropology” statement

Florence Babb led a subcommittee of the AOC comprised of Jay, Nan, and Deb in continuing to revise the “What is Anthropology” statement on the AAA website. Their revised version is now posted.

B. 2011 Planned Activities

The AOC will follow up on its review of the report of the Committee on Race and Racism in Anthropology by seeing that the report is posted on the AAA website for discussion by AAA membership. The designated AOC sub-committee will begin discussion of a new charge to the CMIA as outlined above. In addition, the AOC will review requests for new or modified awards proposed by the Committee on Ethics and the Committee on Public Policy. The AOC will also consider dues restructuring for AAA membership, after the Finance Committee has first taken up the matter. And finally, the AOC will take up other business including the review of committee reports, as per its charge.