American Anthropological Association

Committee Annual Report

Anthropological Communication Committee

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Question 1
Please report on the activities your group undertook during the year. Indicate how these activities correspond to the group’s charge (objectives and responsibilities, provided above). If there has been any shortfall in accomplishing those objectives, please explain.

ACC is organized to support 4 of the 12 objectives in the AAA Long Range Plan (#s 1, 2, 8, 11). ACC’s separate actions and the sum of the committee’s activities combine to indicate enormous support of the 4 objectives in 2013. As detailed below, these actions and activities center around the publications program and its future (including existing journals, AA, AnthroSource, the new AAA online-only, public journal *Open Anthropology*, and planning for the future of print and electronic publishing), facilitating access to AAA publications and information about the publications program (FAQ document; use of social media/SIC; *Open Anthropology*). The following summarizes ACC actions, activities, and accomplishments in 2013.

Specific Actions

May 17, 2013, passed the following resolutions:

I) ACC recommended to the Executive Board that journal prices for institutional subscribers increase by 6.5% in 2014.

November 20, 2013, passed the following resolutions:

II) ACC recommended the Executive Board accept Committee for the Future of Print and Electronic Publishing’s recommendation on publishing future. Specifically, ACC recommended the Executive Board adopt the following slate of mutually reinforcing items:
- 1) the Executive Board authorize creation of a publishing oversight working group within CFPEP;
- 2) the Executive Board adopt digital-primary member copies to all journals by 2017 (fully digital access to members, print copies available at cost to members who elect to buy such);
- 3) the Executive Board require each sponsoring section, who wishes to see its title listed in the Request for Proposals service-level agreement forthcoming in 2016, submit to the publishing oversight working group a five-year publishing sustainability plan for its title in June 2014; and
- 4) the Executive Board modify allocation of the Wiley-Blackwell royalties by 2015 that reflect the AAA’s need to underwrite publishing program changes and incentivize each publishing sponsor to act in the interest of the entire portfolio’s sustainability.

III) ACC recommended that the Executive Board adopt the following policy statement regarding publishing proposals from outside the AAA. CFPEP’s publications oversight committee will consider proposals for adding publications to AnthroSource that are not sponsored by the AAA or one of its components, providing that:
- Including the publication is consistent with the interests of the Association and the publishing program’s core values: quality, breadth, access and sustainability.
- The publication’s sponsor is a reputable entity, indicated by peer-review practices and editorial integrity.
- The publication has a demonstrated track record for publishing on time and fulfilling its frequency promise.
- The sponsor has the authority and willingness to grant the AAA all rights to its published content, in the US and all foreign countries in all languages, including subsidiary and derivative and electronic rights.
- The sponsor plans to include full-text and preference would be given to sponsors who agree to begin with Volume 1, Issue 1 of their title.

ACC accepted the following reports:

1) AAA Publishing Department Report from Publishing Director, Oona Schmid (5/17/2013)
2) The 2012 Editor Reports (5/17/2013)
3) The AAA Annual Meetings Department update from Meetings Director, Jason Watkins (5/18/2013). NOTE: subsequent to the May 2013 meeting, AOC is responsible for reviewing reports of the Annual Meetings Executive Program Committee and of the AAA Annual Meetings Department (as of August 12, 2013).
4) *Anthropology* Editor’s Report (11/20/2013)
5) *Open Anthropology* Editor’s Report (11/20/2013)
6) ACC/SIC Report (11/20/2013)

ACC discussion items:
ACC’s experience in developing and launching the ACC/SIC online survey also revealed enormous weaknesses in the survey software.

New Initiatives

1) An Editor Search Committee and Chair for *American Anthropologist* will be formed in the near future.

Question 2

Please indicate your group’s plans for activities in the coming year. If they represent significant modification or elaboration of the stated objectives and responsibilities, please explain.

The plans for the coming year include continuing to follow through on the actions and activities of the previous year, in particular to working with CFPEP and Section Assembly as relevant, on the future of the publications (as detailed in the November 2013 recommendation; also changes to AnthroSource), planning for that future, and developing specific policy recommendations moving forward. In addition to its ongoing responsibilities with respect to AAA publications, including *AA* and *Open Anthropology*, *ThisIsAnthropology*, and the development of AAA’s social media presence, ACC will focus attention on any issues that arise in relation to publications and communications.

Question 3

This question refers to any specific tasks or activities in the current Strategic Implementation Plan. They are briefly reported separately so that they can be reviewed by the appropriate staff. If your unit was not assigned any activities in the current SIP, please skip Part II.

Please briefly report on how you have fulfilled, or plan to fulfill, those specific tasks or activities, whether new or ongoing, that appear in the current Strategic Implementation Plan. Please refer to each one by their item number.

It is unclear how to respond to this question because some issues in the SIP are various committee responsibilities or editor responsibilities or staff responsibilities. I tried going through each item that is related to publications but it did not seem wise for me to say that ACC has “fulfilled” or plans to fulfill specific tasks or activities.

It is important to note that ACC will continue to monitor all publishing-related activities under its charge.

It is important to note that ACC will work in conjunction with the Publishing Office and the EB to facilitate the AA Editor Search.

It is important to note that two tasks in the SIP (3.7.2; 5.1.5) have not been implemented by November 2013:

- **3.7.2** Evaluate AnthroGuide’s content, audience(s), format and mode (print or online), and make recommendations to the EB for any changes, in time for consideration at the November 2013 meeting.
- **5.1.5** By September 2013, the EB will ask the *American Anthropologist* editor-in-chief to consider revising the AA style sheet to include a statement about the implications of linguistic choices in the texts of articles (e.g., gender-specific pronouns) for the inclusion or exclusion of social categories, and extend these remarks to the text of abstracts in languages other than English (even in languages where gender-specific pronouns may continue to be normative to refer to unmarked categories).

Question 4

Please comment on any issues or recommendations you would like to bring to the special attention of the Executive Board. These might be problems in fulfilling group objectives and responsibilities or in fulfilling tasks listed in the SIP, the need for additional resources, recommended changes to the group charge (objectives, responsibilities, products/outcomes), and recommended changes to the committee structure or membership. Any problems or recommendations listed here will be discussed by the Association Operations Committee and then considered at the EB meeting for possible action.

We are in a new world with the Strategic Implementation Plan. ACC (as well as all the other committees, etc) will need to work with the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) to ensure we have a good system in place moving forward.

As indicated in previous reports, ACC discussions and findings from the first ACC/SIC report indicate that there is need to direct resources to radically improve the AAA website overall. It behooves AAA to include funding for assessing the entire communications strategy that includes revamping the AAA website.

In the effort to launch *Open Anthropology*, it became clear that there are some expenses associated with its ongoing development and maintenance, particularly the *Open Anthropology* website. It will be very important to include a budget for costs associated with *Open Anthropology* in the annual budget proposal.

ACC’s experience in developing and launching the ACC/SIC online survey also revealed enormous weaknesses in the survey software.
used by AAA. Considering the number of surveys produced by AAA in its divisions, departments and committees (including CFPEP whose survey research is so important to determining the course of the publications program future), it also behooves AAA to include new budget for more powerful survey software.