

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
CSSE – Science Education Research Group
Meeting Minutes
May 30, 2010.

Opening:

The Annual General Meeting of the Science Education Research Group was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on May 30, 2010 in Montreal, Quebec by SERG president Azza Sharkawy.

Present:

Anthony Bartley, Robert Bechtel, Trudy Bergere, Michael Bowen, Shawn Bullock, Karen Goodnough, Yovita Gwekwerere, Gregory Henkeman, Majid Maliken, Samson Nashon, Wendy Nielsen, Stephen Norris, Pam Osmond, Sharon Pelech, Marie-Claire Shanahan, Azza Sharkawy, Michelle Tan, Roland Van Oostveen, Dawn Wiseman, Hagop Yacoubian.

1. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve - Samson Nashon
Second – Karen Goodnough
Vote: **CARRIED**

2. Approval of Minutes of 2009 AGM

see Agenda items 4 (b) i and iv

3. Business from 2009 AGM

a) New SERG executive position, Graduate Student Representative

Hagop presented his informal reflection along with suggestions for next year. He noted that serving on the executive is a more than just a good opportunity –it is a valuable learning experience about how the group (SERG) works and how the executive runs. Hagop encouraged grad students to serve in this position. He also suggested additional responsibilities for the position, in addition to the present sharing and voting i.e. someone serving in the position might encourage other students to submit proposals through student SIG (CCGSE). One example of how this might be accomplished is to draft and distribute an email to grad students. Azza mentioned this is a great way to build SERG membership and recruit new student members and extended a warm “Thank-you!” to Hagop for his service this year.

b) Awards Presentation

Three PAPER AWARDS were selected from reviewers rankings and presented to:

- **Robert Bechtel (Alberta)** Analysis of Public Discourse: Understanding How Language Use Can Broaden or Narrow the Gap Between Western Science and Aboriginal Narratives / L'analyse du discours public : comprendre comment l'utilisation du langage peut augmenter ou réduire l'écart entre la science occidentale et les récits des autochtones
- **Michelle Tan (UBC)** Connecting Biology Teachers' Professional Development to the Enactment of a New Genetics Curriculum – The 'Learning Study' Approach / La formation continue des professeurs de biologie et la prestation d'un nouveau cours en génétique : l'approche de l'étude de l'apprentissage
- **Gul Shahzad Sarwar (Ottawa)** Comparing Two Types of Remedial Instructions (Written Concept-Oriented Exercises and Multimedia Concept-Oriented Instruction) to Address Learners' Misconceptions Using Structural Assessment of Knowledge in the Domain of Physics / Comparaison entre deux types de méthodes orthopédagogiques (exercices écrits et multimédia) pour corriger les idées fausses des apprenants à l'aide de l'évaluation de la structure des connaissances dans le domaine de la physique

The TRAVEL BURSARY was selected by lottery and presented to:

- **Sharon Pelech (Calgary)**

4. Reports

a) President

Azza invited comments from the floor about several points:

- i) Should SERG continue with the awards? All members present were in favour.
- ii) Comments were invited regarding wording and criteria of the awards. Full text regarding the awards process was presented on-screen for the audience to review. Azza noted one addition to the Travel Bursary award that read: "a lottery system will be used to identify the winner". It was noted that Paper Award recipients will only be able to win the award once. This does not apply to the Travel Bursary.

iii) There was an extended discussion about student classification. Michael asked about eligibility for undergraduate students as well as graduate students. Azza replied that the intention of the awards was to encourage paper presentations from graduate students. Wendy asked if this might disadvantage smaller institutions that might have undergraduate students but few (or no) graduate students. Marie- Claire noted that the text stipulates “student” and there is no way to know if nominees are graduate or undergraduate. Azza asked if we want to re-name the award to read “STUDENT AWARD”? Samson Nashon suggested we remove the term “graduate”, leaving “student”.

ACTION REQUIRED

iv) Audience was polled by Azza about their thoughts on the lottery system for the BURSARY, explaining the intention is to increase conference attendance (by students) and the criterion is simply attending the conference, i.e. not based on merit (a paper). Tony suggested that the title be changed from Graduate Student Travel Bursary Award to Student Travel Bursary, removing the word AWARD from any documents and references. Also insert a separate heading for the Bursary (currently placed under Student Paper Awards).

ACTION REQUIRED

v) 2010 Bursary AWARD - 2 applications were submitted. Azza invited ideas of how to get the word out for next year? Majid suggested sending a call to the CSSE email list serve (Tim). Tony suggested SERG should emphasize that this award is “free money” and also that and we limit eligibility to SERG members, highlighting that the money is there for those who want it.

ACTION REQUIRED

vi) Another initiative was to include more French language in SERG communications and sessions. Azza noted the important contribution of Marie-Claire who spear-headed the initiative i.e. SERG newsletter and call for volunteers for translators. No responses to the latter were received and the executive understands and appreciates that the task of translating materials is onerous task and costly. Azza noted that Donatille Mujawamariya raised the francophone issue at the 2009 AGM and (via Azza) has suggested adding a blog to the SERG website in order to increase links with researchers, policy-makers, teachers, and other members. Roland informed the audience that the website is presently set up as a blog.

vii) Statistics from Tim were presented:

- 58 SERG members (Fall 2009)
- 43 SERG members (May 2010) 18 of these are students (difference of 9)

Michael asked about CSSE numbers overall. Karen attended the CSSE AGM and noted that the even though the actual numbers vary, for various reasons, CSSE membership has increased this year. The reasons for this variation are worth consideration e.g. Azza noted that she had interest in joining a new association but had already registered her SERG membership. The CSSE website does not offer the option of joining a new association on the website. Several members noted that one must call to join a new association. All agreed that having this information available to individuals on the website may help to increase SERG membership.

viii) Budget:

Balance - \$605 to date (less AGM snacks - \$115), after 2010 graduate student awards

b) VP/Conference Chair

- i) 2009 AGM MINUTES –were placed on-screen for review which mostly comprised the May 2009 discussion around the two initiatives: student awards and francophone communication. Further discussion under point 4 (b) (iv) below.

2010 conference presentation applications:

36 proposals from the membership (down from 38 for 2010)

13 proposals were eligible for the Student Paper Award, a large pool to chose from to award strong papers. Marie- Claire points to the need for a large pool in 2011 and 2012.

- ii) SERG conference sessions

At the 2010 congress, SERG was provided with 7 sessions. No poster sessions were provided, despite repeated requests. CACS gave no reasons for this decision. As a result, more papers had to be rejected this year than in past years. An extended discussion about these issues took place. The number of sessions assigned to SERG seems to be a year to year decision from CACS. No reasons for assignment were given. Referring to the Conference Program, Tony noted that fewer “good spots” were assigned to SERG i.e. no sessions in Day 2, but rather 1st morning and last afternoon spots. He also noted that the political side of SERG working with CACS is very important and CACS must know that SERG is an active and growing group that wants to be part of CACS.

Marie-Claire noted she had frequent communications with the program chair of CACS (the person who assigned sessions). This person was serving the first of a two year term and also figuring out the political process. Despite repeated requests for responses to questions, answers were not provided. The hope is that next year we might have a better sense of how SERG/CACS fit.

Regarding the issue of session times, Azza asked the audience for an idea of “good time” for SERG sessions, posters, AGM, and SERG dinner inviting people to chat about ideas in the large group. It was noted that even though SERG has little to do with the final decision, for CSSE 2009, SERG got what they asked for with only minor adjustments. Tony brought up the issue of poster sessions, noting that in the past, SERG was able to “fit in as many as we want”. Others noted that this year’s lack of space for SERG posters might be a larger issue of available space in this particular venue (Concordia).

iii) Proposal Review Process

Marie- Claire thanked the reviewers for their service, realizing it was a very busy time for most reviewers. The review process was especially important for the student paper awards to receive a full complement of diverse reviews. Marie-Claire felt the quality of the proposed papers was very strong. SERG continues to face challenges of finding francophone reviewers. Many volunteers came forward but given they were from the same institutions as authors of the submissions. Finding the balance of reviewers/institutions was difficult. The executive will continue to look for bilingual reviewers from a range of institutions. SERG now has a fully bilingual review form for 2011 proposals.

ACTION REQUIRED

iv) 2009 AGM Minutes – Review of Motions

Missing a motion regarding how funds are spent, specifically in terms of “money we will have next year” versus “money in the budget from the current year”. This was triggered by the student awards and how budget decisions will be made. Marie Claire indicated statement “up to 20% of annual budget for cookies at AGM”. For 2010 AGM, the cost was \$110, with comments about the high cost of catered food and that outside food cannot be brought in for conference events.

ACTION REQUIRED

a) Motion for Student Awards

3 on merit and 1 bursary for travel to attract students early in the year). Marie-Claire showed the motion passed and asked if there are any other changes from 2010 AGM (besides removing “Graduate” from student) that contradict the motion?

b) Ongoing questions from 2009

The idea of a one-time award is not in the motion. Is that something we think should go in the motion as passed? Or should this be in the description but not in the motion?

David called for less meritorious criteria. Why always the “best” student papers?

How to encourage francophone members to join and participate in the conference?

There was a considerable number of francophone applications for the 2010 conference. Anecdotally our efforts to make SERG a national association have been fruitful. CSSE will translate permanent documents for us (no fee), for example, review forms but not Newsletter, etc. Marie-Claire will inquire with Donatille about how the conference (see 2009 minutes) is able to run in 23 languages. So far, we have left it up to individual presenters to have English and/or French. SERG is not able to provide oral translation services at the conference.

ACTION REQUIRED

Motion to approve minutes: Majid Maliken

Seconded: Dawn Wiseman

Vote: CARRIED

c) Secretary/Treasurer

Trudy has completed her term and she is unable to stand for another term due to professional obligations. Azza spoke of the work performed for the executive and graciously thanked Trudy for her service. Trudy had no report to make other than to extend her appreciation for the opportunity to serve SERG and note that she looks forward to future opportunities to contribute to the organization.

d) Graduate Student Representative

See 3(a) for Hagop’s report

5. Report on SERG Website

i) Registration

Roland noted that space is currently being provided free of charge by UOIT. There is no indication from the Vice-Provost (UOIT) about how long this will continue. The url must be registered, which may involve a small charge (\$24-\$30/year). Presently Roland is bearing the cost. His preference is for registration under the name of SERG.

ACTION REQUIRED

ii) Posting Process

Call for decision about process of posting to the website (for example, Tony's document about CRC). Roland suggested we adopt a more formal way to post things on website. There is a fair amount of flexibility for posting pages ad hoc. Comments can be added to all pages and posts, opening running discussions about any item on any page. Roland encouraged people to get into the site and have fun. Start the discourse and make it a virtual meeting place instead of just the AGM place. Shawn extended an invitation for members to email Roland or himself with comments and suggestions at sergcanada.ca

AZZA showed the SERG website on the screen for the members to view/explore and pointed out several points, including:

- Job postings – for example, UW posting
- AGM minutes
- Links to members websites

iii) Privacy Issues

Roland warned that we must consider privacy issues. Majid suggested the idea of links to faculty webpages. Samson Nashon suggested posting a list of members and institutions, statements about their research and other details. Tony suggested offering an *OPT IN* to those who want links to their webpage. Roland was asked if we need a process to do the vetting, for example, wider participation for ad hoc or a standing committee responsible making decisions for major decisions related to the website. Roland also expressed his reluctance about being the decision-maker. Azza extended an invitation to the members to join Roland to work on this issue. There were no volunteers so Azza will distribute a call to the entire membership to encourage and invite people to join the discussion.

iv) Authority

Azza asked if this meeting is a good time to strike a committee. Majid asked about how such a committee would be struck and who would make decisions. A general discussion followed. Comments from the discussion pointed to the executive to take the lead on these issues about the website.

ACTION REQUIRED

MOTION: *To give the executive the authority to make decisions about the content of the website. All postings and submissions for website approval should go to the executive.*

Moved: Majid Maliken

Seconded : Roland Van Oostveen

Vote :CARRIED

ACTION REQUIRED

v) SERG Newsletter

During the meeting, several questions emerged about the newsletter:

Should we continue with newsletter?

Should the newsletter be a new duty of the Secretary Treasurer?

Should we establish due dates for submission and publication?

A general discussion followed. Greg noted that the newsletter is a good way to generate student interest and he thinks we should continue. Azza agreed. Roland brought up the issue of distribution, noting passive distribution (on SERG website) plus active distribution (send out via list serve). Azza, Marie-Claire and Trudy agree.

MOTION: *Co-ordination and distribution of newsletter and posting on website after approval of the executive becomes the duty of Secretary/Treasurer*

Moved: Yovita Gwekwerere

Second: Michael Bowen

Vote - CARRIED

6. New Business

i) Dissertation Awards

Tony noted that we have not offered this type of award. Should SERG consider this type of award? CACS has a lovely award. IF SERG offers such an award, then perhaps the

presentation should be part of the greater CACS event. Karen suggested CATE criteria for direction.

Tony noted we can make a *NOTICE of MOTION* about a dissertation award, which would require a change to the SERG constitution. We do not have to do it next year, but at least we are giving notice in advance. Tony suggested we consider this NOTICE of MOTION to consider changing the constitution (at the discretion of the executive) to include a doctoral dissertation. There is no need to vote on this Notice. Karen asked for the Notice to also include consideration of a master's thesis award.

NOTICE of MOTION

ii) Math Ed Members:

Michael noted that few math ed members join SERG. Math Ed runs their own conferences. Michael suggested that next year, the executive briefly explore how the math people do this and provide an information sheet about this is done. Perhaps SERG could pair off and form more of a unit with math ed, noting that we spend very little time with the people we are most like. The general idea is to form a group with the math people.

Dawn noted that she attended the math conference. Their group has built a community at the national level. Format is fabulous and she would highly recommend meeting with them. Gathering information about how/why they do operate and the associated costs involved would be a very good task for the executive to bring forward at next year's SERG AGM. There are many benefits to this group. The presentation format is very different from than at CSSE.

Samson Nashon suggested we also determine how many math educators are involved in this group and compare with science ed (numbers are going down).

ACTION REQUIRED

7. EXECUTIVE 2010/2011 - CALL FOR NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

• President

According to the constitution, Vice-President Marie-Claire Shanahan was acclaimed as President for 2010-2011.

• VP/Conference Chair

Azza noted that usually the Secretary-Treasurer is nominated for Vice-President; however the current Secretary/Treasurer, Trudy Bergere is unable to stand for the upcoming term. Marie-Claire Shanahan nominated Jerine Pegg. No other nominations put forward.

MOTION: *to elect Jerine Pegg as SERG Vice-President/Conference Chair for 2010-2011*

Moved: Marie-Claire Shanahan

Seconded: Dawn Wiseman

Vote: **CARRIED**

- **Secretary / Treasurer**

No nominations for this position were put forward. No member of the audience expressed interest. Azza noted there is one person who has expressed interest but not in attendance at the AGM. Members of the audience agreed that the executive will consult widely to fill the position. In the interim, Trudy Bergere agreed to stay in place until the position is filled, with the exception of taking on the responsibility for the newsletter, advising that she will not be able to take minutes at the 2011 SERG AGM.

ACTION REQUIRED

- **Graduate Student Representative**

Sharon Pelech expressed interest in the position and was acclaimed by the members.

- **SERG website**

Roland Van Oostveen agreed to continue his work with the website

MOTION: *to adjourn the AGM*

Moved: Jerine Pegg

Second: Michael Bowen

Vote: **CARRIED**

The next general meeting will be held during CSSE 2011 in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

Minutes prepared by: Trudy Bergere