

Undergraduate Educators and Administrators Section Meeting—March 25, 2021
CSCA 2021—Online Virtual Meeting (due to COVID-19)

Attendees: Aimee Lau (Chair), Donna Pawlowski, (Vice-Chair), Brendan Young (Secretary), Amy Aldridge Sanford

I. Call to Order

Aimee Lau (chair) called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

II. Review of minutes from the 2020 section meeting.

Brendan Young’s revised minutes from the 2020 virtual meeting were available to our membership. Donna moved to accept the minutes as presented. Aimee seconded. The minutes were accepted as presented.

III. Old Business

A. Innovative Undergraduate Communication Program Award update

Aimee emailed Tiffany yesterday about the proposed award, noting the Outstanding Undergraduate Communication Program Award had previously been awarded at the Hall of Fame Luncheon before the section was reorganized. Tiffany wrote that awards presented at the luncheon must have \$2,500 raised and a \$5,000+ fundraising goal for an endowed award fund. She noted un-endowed awards are much easier to give at the business meeting. Also, if the award has not yet raised \$2,500 for the endowment, a name may not be attached to it.

Amy Aldridge Sanford clarified that efforts had been undertaken to pare the number of awards at the luncheon. She noted that the new donation check-boxes available during registration to contribute to specific funds have really helped with fundraising. Having a name attached to the award also helps with fundraising. Aimee explained to all that the proposed new award was renamed to allow smaller programs to compete with larger programs on the criterion of “innovation” (vs. “outstanding-ness”), and she mentioned the possibility of giving the winner a slot at the subsequent conference to explain what they do that is innovative. Amy thinks there might be a graduate program award, and suggested we follow their lead or partner with them. Aimee agreed to look into a graduate program award and the possibility of patterning our award after theirs or partnering with them. She will also talk to Tiffany about the feasibility of raising funds with an optional donation check-box during registration.

IV. New Business

A. Election of Officers

Joy Daggs had notified Aimee she was unable to attend, but was willing to be an officer. Aimee is also willing to be an officer.

1. Chair

Donna Pawlowski assumed the position of chair.

2. Vice-Chair

Aimee Lau self-nominated to the position of vice-chair. No other nominations were received and Aimee was elected by acclamation.

3. Secretary

Joy Daggs was nominated by Aimee to the position of secretary. No other nominations were received and Joy was elected by acclamation.

B. Conference Statistics

1. Submissions for 2021: 3 panel submissions

2. We had 3 slots for panels and 1 slot for our business meeting.

3. Of the 3 panels submitted, 2 were accepted. One additional panel was created to fill the final allotted spot.

4. Congratulations to our top panel: “Inspiring Best Practices in Program Review and Assessment.” The chair of this panel is Rachel Davidson. The panelists are Carol Mills, Kathy Denker, Joshua Westwick, Cassandra Hill, and Valerie Young. Donna will send (electronic) certificates to this year’s winners.

5. Our updated count for the number of members currently in our section is over 200 members strong. We are very excited that our section has so many members! We are hoping to encourage more activity from members. While many have chosen our section, few are active.

V. Passing of the Gavel

VI. CSCA 2022: Madison, Wisconsin

A. The 2022 conference will be held from March 30 through April 3 at the Madison Concourse Hotel. The theme of the conference is “Re-Connect” Donna noted the theme is an excellent fit for our section.

B. Aimee set up a Google Forms to sign up for paper/panel readers, chairs, and respondents. She will send it to the entire section.

C. Conference Ideas

Spotlight panel: Donna discussed how we will go about constituting the spotlight panel. We have three slots (not counting the business meeting). Aimee noted there is an actual equation determining the number of slots.

Online instruction: We talked about the potential and limits of the past year's online communication.

Reconnecting with ourselves: The cognitive load seemed to slow down faculty progress and responsiveness during a fast-changing crisis. Donna observed that the theme would support the idea of reconnecting with ourselves and our passion for teaching and scholarship.

Declining enrollments: A perennial topic is the ever-looming demographic cliff and the uncertainty about student enrollments online and in-person following a year of (mostly) online coursework.

Emotional labor: Aimee noted that the year has been emotionally draining for both teachers and students. Students rely on her and other faculty for emotional support. Brendan mentioned the potential for an emotional labor panel.

Mental health accessibility: Brendan mentioned the expansion of tele-mental health on his institution, which made counseling much more accessible for students, particularly those learning through distance education. Aimee suggested partnering with the Health Communication Interest Group on that panel.

Crisis communication: Another crisis will occur at some point in the future; what can we do to better prepare next time? Coordinating communication at each institution with so little time during/after spring break was a real challenge, and leadership at the federal and state level was lacking or varied widely by state. Perhaps we could co-sponsor a panel with the Organizational and Professional Communication Interest Group.

Shift to digitization: Brendan mentioned the pandemic has accelerated digitization. Tenure files are now digital, rather than paper. Donna concurred that her institution has seen a shift toward accepting/requiring digital documents.

VII. Adjournment

Donna moved to adjourn. The motion passed.