

**Minutes of the  
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING  
ASSOCIATION FOR POLITICAL THEORY  
November 5, 2006**

**Presidents' Room (University Club), Indiana Memorial Union  
Bloomington, Indiana**

**Prepared by Johnny Goldfinger, APT Secretary/Treasurer**

**Members present:** Chris Anderson, Craig Borowiak, Lisa Ellis, Simona Goi, Johnny Goldfinger, Emily Hauptmann, Renée Heberle, Breena Holland, Jeff Isaac, Randy LaBlanc, Liz Markovits, Rob Martin, Amy McCready, Dennis McEnnerney, Margot Morgan, Dan Sabia, Greg Streich, and Darren Walhof.

**Guests:**

**Annual Business Meeting of the Association for Political Theory**

**I. Opening remarks (Simona Goi, Governance Committee Chair)**

The annual business meeting of the Association for Political Theory (APT) was called to order by **Simone Goi** at 8:13 a.m. She welcomed all the members to the meeting and provided a brief outline of the agenda. It included a debriefing of the 2006 conference, discussion about the 2007 conference, the election of one new member to the Governance Committee, expanding resources for professional development on the APT website, and our relations with other scholarly associations. She also noted an unlisted addition to the agenda involving evaluations of future conferences.

**II. New Business**

Goi observed that the conference seemed successful and had heard positive comments about the high quality of the panels, papers, and discussions. **Liz Markovits** also heard great feedback. She said that there were some problems, however, on individual panels with the papers. It was hard to tell the quality of the papers from the proposal abstracts. **Jeff Isaac** asked if the problem was substandard papers. Markovits responded that one paper was particularly problematic. A member from the floor added that the quality of the papers cannot be controlled. The member's experience was that some people were nervous and they were trying to do their best. The length of some presentations was also a problem that needed policing. A tone needed to be set at panels to get presentations under control.

Goi asked the program chairs to speak of their experiences. **Rob Martin** stated that the chairs had put together a packet of information for next year's Program Committee. He also mentioned that it would be helpful to have veterans on the Program Committee for next year. Goi remarked that having reminders for completing papers

worked well. Martin observed that the paper submission deadline was a little earlier for this conference. **Lisa Ellis** added that our requirement to submit papers early made the APT conference distinctive. Markovits asked if fewer people were reading papers before the panels. Ellis replied that she had a different perception and thought they were reading the papers. Martin asked if we could tell how many people were downloading papers. **Dennis McEnnerney** responded that he can look into it. He observed that, in the past, it seemed as though there were only a couple audience members at each panel who had actually read the papers in advance. **Margot Morgan** maintained that the scheduling for this year's conference made it difficult for people because it was held on the weekend before elections.

Markovits raised a question about the page length of papers. She noted that papers should not have been more than 30 double spaced pages. The maximum length for papers was included in e-mails to presenters, but people did not read or pay attention to the messages. Also, some chairs were not performing their duties to keep papers manageable. McEnnerney suggested that the expectations for the length of papers be included in the call for papers. Markovits observed that one paper was around 70 pages long. **Darren Walhof** added that excessively long papers were the exception.

**Amy McCready** commented that the Program Committee did a good job recruiting discussants. The long papers, however, make the discussant job onerous. McEnnerney asked if discussants should be told that they do not have to discuss long or late papers. Goi remarked that the quality of the discussants was very good. She suggested that there be a separate committee to recruit discussants and chairs for the conference. She also noted that the mix of rank on the panels worked well.

Goi asked if there were any other comments. **Dan Sabia** stated that one presenter was moved to another panel but no one informed people on the original panel. Markovits replied that late changes were made to the program and a mistake happened in that case. A member from the floor asked if there was a rule not to send in proposals for panels. McEnnerney responded that there was no rule but the practice was discouraged. Goi remarked that some people said they appreciated the fact that the Program Committee did accept one or two panel proposals as is. Martin also noted that even in this case a participant was added. McEnnerney observed that the Program Committee reserves the right to move people around if a panel is proposed. Martin added that submitting a panel is not really an advantage to getting on the program.

Walhof maintained that the starting times and length of panels worked very well. Markovits observed that attendance at the Friday morning panels was great.

No further comments about the 2006 conference were offered, so Goi moved the discussion to the location for the 2007 conference. McEnnerney stated that there were no definite offers to host the 2007 conference, but several people were interested. Isaac volunteered to have the APT conference return to Bloomington. McEnnerney thanked Isaac for his offer, but was concerned about hosting the conference twice in a row at the same location. He said there were three other people who expressed an interest in hosting

the conference, but they needed to look into logistical concerns before making a commitment. These locations were the University of Pennsylvania, Wesleyan University, and the University of Western Ontario. Sabia volunteered the University of South Carolina as a fallback if necessary. McEnnerney also mentioned that **Andrew Rehfield** would be willing to look into hosting the conference at Washington University again.

McEnnerney noted that there were several factors that needed to be taken into account, including hotel space and money. Sabia asked if the conference would again be in November. McEnnerney replied that he would like it to be scheduled in mid October to late November. He added that, for the future, Texas A&M had given a solid commitment in two years, 2008. Ellis observed that the nicest most beautiful facility at Texas A&M was the Bush library. Would the APT prefer a different location? McEnnerney stated that, in three years, 2009, Notre Dame had made a tentative commitment to host the conference. Goi added that the football schedule was a big scheduling concern at Notre Dame.

Goi also raised the issue of having the conference at a place with outside attractions versus a more isolated location. She observed that an isolated location keeps people at the conference. She was concerned that the University of Pennsylvania was in the middle of Philadelphia, which might lure people away from the panels. The advantage, however, of larger cities is airline travel. Isaac added that more people would come to a more accessible location. **Craig Borowiak** asked how many walk-in registrants the conference got this year. **Johnny Goldfinger** responded that there were about 15. McEnnerney stated that last year in St. Louis there were two. Isaac observed that there may be more walk-in registration in Philadelphia because the drive is relatively easy for many people in the northeast.

Goi next turned the attention of the meeting to the election of a new officer to the APT Governance Committee. There was only one candidate, Darren Walhof. She asked for nominations and self-nominations from the floor at the business meeting. There was no response to her request. **Greg Streich** asked what being on the Governance Committee entailed. Goi replied that there was not too much to do. The Program Committee puts together the conference program. The Governance Committee is involved with long range planning for the APT. There is a minimal commitment of time. There are some e-mail exchanges and a couple of meetings at the conference. **Emily Hauptmann** added that the committee thinks about what we want to do as an organization and its connections with other organizations. It serves as an informal long range planning committee.

Goi once again asked for nominations from the floor. Streich nominated himself. Renée Heberle also nominated herself. Goi passed around paper and asked people to vote by writing the name of their preferred candidate. She named the three candidates, Heberle, Streich, and Walhof. The ballots were collected and McEnnerney took responsibility for tallying the votes.

### III. Old Business

Goi announced a change to the agenda. The discussion of the APT's relationship with other scholarly associations would precede expanding resources on the APT website. Goldfinger stated that he had talked with representatives from the American Political Science Association (APSA), Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA), and Western Political Science Association (WPSA) at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. All were interested in collaborating with the APT. The APSA seemed very interested in maintaining a dialogue with the APT and providing support if possible. The APSA was also interested in having the APT use a paper archive website that it was developing. The MPSA offered the APT an opportunity to organize and sponsor its own section of panels at the MPSA's annual meetings. The WPSA asked if the APT would like to sponsor or conduct a workshop on the day prior to the WPSA conference. These pre-conference workshops have become very popular.

Heberle remarked that there was a feminist theory group that already held a pre-conference workshop at the WPSA meeting. An APT workshop might overlap with the feminist theory group. Isaac commented that it was not a good idea for the APT to get involved with the conference programs of other associations. The APT creates its own community. These types of program collaborations duplicate what other associations are already doing at their conferences. McEnnerney observed that these collaborations would require the creation of more program committees. Hauptmann noted that the WPSA attracts many theorists, particularly feminists.

Next, Goi raised the issue of expanding the resources for professional development on the APT website. She mentioned four possible categories of resources including curricular development, a listserv or bulletin board for discussions, assistance with placement, promotion, and tenure issues, and a list of external reviewers.

McEnnerney said he could set up a link to an external website if members wanted to take on any of these tasks. Hauptmann added that expanding APT support for its members would not happen unless people stepped up to take responsibility. It will probably require a small committee committed to making the initiatives happen. The APT should ask for volunteers.

Having finished the discussion on website resources, McEnnerney announced the results of the election. Walhof received ten votes, Streich had four votes, and Heberle received two votes. He observed that next year **Ed Wingenbach's** and Hauptmann's terms expired. **Breana Holland's** position as representative from the Program Committee would be filled with a new representative by the Governance Committee.

Goi noted that there were a significant number of volunteers for the 2007 Program Committee. She also stated that a chair/discussant committee will be included. Hauptmann said she was willing to offer advice on how to set up a chair/discussant committee.

The last agenda item for Old Business was conference evaluations. Walhof stated that an evaluation form could be developed on the Survey Monkey website. An e-mail message could be sent to all conference participants with a link to the Survey Monkey questionnaire. He invited people to make suggestions for questions.

McCready asked if the questionnaire could be used to find out if people were interested in a web resource page. Martin added that it could be used to solicit ideas from members about what resources they would want on the APT website. McEnnerney interjected that this survey would be strictly for evaluating the conference.

Markovits recommended that conference participants be asked to identify any discussants who did a good job. Hauptmann commented that this question was included on the paper survey used last year. Holland suggested that participants be asked about panels and topics they would like to see on the program. McEnnerney observed that, since the first conference, the APT has made sure historical and feminist theory panels were on the program. Comparative political theory, however, has not had a lot of representation. Markovits said people had expressed a desire to not be on the same type of panels with the same people. McEnnerney mentioned that **Paul Gomberg** was concerned about more racial and ethnic diversity at the conference. Ellis responded that it was hard to get gender diversity in political theory. McEnnerney suggested that members and the Program Committee encourage proposals from underrepresented groups.

#### **IV. Other Business**

Goi asked if there was any new business. Sabia inquired about the number of members in the APT. McEnnerney replied that there were 600 members as of the last week. Sabia next asked about the legal status of the APT. McEnnerney responded that the APT's legal status was in limbo. Nothing had been done over the past year. There was a new lawyer at Colorado College and McEnnerney was waiting for things to settle down.

McEnnerney said there were two advantages to incorporating. First, the APT could have its own bank account and draw interest. Second, it could take tax deductible donations. There was one major disadvantage. The APT would have to hire an accountant. At this time, there is no pressing need to incorporate because Colorado College has been very cooperative. The APT's money currently sits in the Philosophy Department's account at Colorado College. Still, the APT will need to move ahead in a couple years.

McEnnerney announced a new project to increase participation by philosophers, who are underrepresented in the APT. The handful of philosophers who come to the conference expressed an interest in having philosophy better represented. McEnnerney suggested copying e-mail addresses of people interested in social/political philosophy from the APA website. They could be sent e-mail messages with information about the APT. McCready asked if it was necessary to build relationships to maintain the APT.

Should the APT focus on developing its strengths as opposed to focusing on recruiting? Goldfinger suggested that people concerned with representation take responsibility for recruiting new members and participants.

Goi asked if potential topics were included in the call for papers. Markovits replied that pedagogy and professional develop were mentioned, but no one responded.

McEnnerney provided an update on moving the website from the SUNY-Oneonta server to Colorado College. He said they were building software for the move. Otherwise, the move will cost approximately \$500. Walhof asked if it was necessary to talk about the APT archive in light of the publishing seminar. McEnnerney responded that as long as the archive is password protected it is not an issue according to **Sandy Thatcher**. Normally, the papers can be replaced with abstracts after the conference is over, if the authors want to do that. Each year two or three authors do make that switch.

## **V. Adjournment**

Sabia thanked all the people who worked hard to make the conference a success. Goi concurred. She thanked Isaac and Morgan for their hospitality at Indiana University, Martin and Markovits for doing an amazing job on the program committee, and Hauptmann and McEnnerney for everything they have done for the APT. Finally, she thanked everyone else for their interest and help. Goi stated that people should feel free to contact members of the Governance Committee if they had any questions. The meeting was then adjourned at 9:14 a.m.

*First posted, 19 September 2007. Reformatted, 26 May 2009.*