April 11, 2016  
Time: 2-3 pm.  
  
**Executive Committee Meeting Notes**Notes include follow-up email discussions.

Attendees via Zoom conference call.

Note take: Jonathan Lee

Jonathan Lee, Charles Townsend, Hester Oberman, Kahena Viale, Chase Way

Agenda for today's meeting:

1. Confirmation of all new Unit Chairs and Cochairs:

New Unit Chairs/Cochairs

Thien-Huong Ninh, PhD California Polytechnic State University  
Jeongyun April Hur, doctoral student, Claremont School of Theology  
Jake Nagasawa, doctoral student, UC Santa Barbara  
Victoria Ballmes, PhD candidate, UC Santa Barbara  
Leigh Ann Hilderbrand, doctoral student, GTU  
Daisy Vargas, PhD candidate, UC Riverside  
Tom Evans, PhD candidate, Claremont Graduate School  
Yuria Celidwen, doctoral student, Pacifica Graduate Institute   
Nathan Fredrickson, doctoral student, UC Santa Barbara   
Jason Sexton, PhD, CSU Fullerton  
  
After brief discussion all were confirmed, except Latin@ and Latin American Religions unit.  
  
Discussion of Latin@ and Latin American Religions unit:  
∙ Jonathan stated Policy File only suggested that it is recommended that chairs are comprised of one PhD and one graduate student.  
∙ Kahena said it was just an intend to have at least 1 finished PhD as co-chair, not necessary.  
∙ Hester: Jonathan used arguments that in the past PhD candidates had been sole chair: Brian Clearwater - who in fact has a finished PhD.  
∙ Jonathan: Kevin Whitesides solo chaired Indigenous Religions in 2014 & 2015 and is only graduate student. Not referring to Brian Clearwater who joined as cochair in 2016, with term ending 2018. [In follow-up email, Jonathan noted: Womanist/Pan-African (solo chaired by graduate students for 3 year term: and renewed for another three year at Tuscon); Indigenous Religions (solo chaired by Kevin Whitesides 2014-2015, confirmed during Emily S. and Hester O. tenure as VP and President); and Religion and Social Science (solo chaired by Krista Wuetz, graduate student, term ended 2016).].   
∙ Concern mentioned that unit would immediately die if these two candidates were not voted in.   
∙ Some voiced it is better to have these two ABDs cochair then to have it empty.  
∙ Jonathan noted that Policy Files says unit is dissolved after two years of being empty.  
∙ Charles mentioned he could try asking a senior scholar to serve as “faculty cochair.”  
∙ Jonathan noted that the new chairs would not be left hanging and the he and Kahena would work closely with them for 2017 and mentor them through the process.  
∙ Hester:suggest to keep quality of AAR/WR high and not delude it with students mentoring students. Important to take the time to look for at least one completed PhD as co-chair.  
  
After discussion, a vote of 4 “Yes” and 1 “No” to confirm/approve Latin@ and Latin American Religions unit cochairs: Daisy V. and Tom E., both Ph.D. candidates. Jonathan Lee and Kahena Viale will work closely with them for next conference, and all will be on the lookout for full PhD with institutional support to be possible faculty cochair.  
  
2. Discuss "honorary co-chair for Jewish Studies"  
A vote of 5 “Yes” and 0 “No” approve Zev Garber as “Honorary co-chair of Jewish Studies” for one year at the 2017 LMU AARWR conference.   
Requires that Garber be active member of AAR national, and pay for conference registration at the 2017 meeting at LMU.  
  
3. Discuss cochair of Ethic re: Gregory Bock, PhD (graduate degree from region, adjunct at U of T at Tyler, with possible relocation)   
  
Kehena mentioned new national AAR policy that allows graduate students and other individuals some flexibility to associate re: participate and serve in the region they are more vested in.  
  
A vote of 5 “Yes” and 0 “No” to approve Gregory Bock as new cochair of Ethics. Condition that Bock would attend AARWR annual meeting. Position will be withdrawn if there is a no show.

4. Open comments on other issues:

**a. Merge Graduate Student Professional Development and Pedagogy (formerly Education and Workshop) ???**

Since Jonathan Lee has not be able to contact Melissa James via email or call (left message on her phone number) re: interest in renewing term. Jonathan Lee proposed merging Graduate Student Professional Development AND Pedagogy (formerly Education and Workshops).

Chase Way, chair of the unit agrees it is a good idea to focus on professional development and pedagogy for graduate students and new PhDs in region at AARWR conferences, especially for programs like GTU and CGU that do not offer teaching assistantship experience.   
  
Motion was proposed that more time is given to contact Melissa James before a final vote is cast for the proposed revised Unit. Request was made that final vote be conducted online instead of conference call for flexibility.  
  
Update: 4:00 pm: Jonathan Lee spoke with Melissa James by phone and she likes the idea of combing the Graduate Student Professional Development AND Pedagogy as revise unit.

Melissa supported the proposal for the following reasons:  
1. Improve audience attendance at the panels (we need to emphasize graduate student and newly minted PhDs)  
2. Attract new PhD and graduate students who share similar needs/concerns.   
3. Net panels is the same: 2 total (in the past, it was one each).  
  
Overall, this will focus on the goal of mentorship and professionalization for members of AARWR.

Jonathan Lee set-up a vote online using Qualtrics and sent out a link to the EC on April 11, with a deadline to vote by April 22, 2016.

**b. Report to E.C. from Deborah Minor**Hester Oberman reported on a communication with Deborah Minor from national AAR:  
1. Suggestion that something on predatory publishing be posted on AARWR webpage for young scholars re: David Publishing and fake open access journals that required payment to publish. AAR only shares emails/name with vetted publishing houses, and is concern about security breaches.

2. AAR National will send AARWR revised Operating Agreement soon.  
  
2. Mentioned training for EC members re: duties and responsibilities. Look out for email on this.

Jonathan Lee mentioned that maybe this message should be for the entire AARWR board, since the change of the Operating Agreement whereby 1. Regional Coordinator is elected by membership; 2. A student is part of the Executive Committee (EC); 3. There are new board members who were recently voted in. Also noted that historically and after change in Operating Agreement, the AARWR’s EC is really just responsible for the organizing of the annual conference and has no power beyond that re: changes to the Policy Files. In other words, AARWR’s EC is a Conference Organizing committee. Whereas, other regions EC are the actual board because they are much smaller in size.

Hester Oberman emphasized AAR national are aware of our unique EC and that the training she mentioned with for our EC and EC only. It will be an orientation training for the EC that focuses on:

* Each EC member is clear of his/her responsibilities and is able and willing to comply
* Working knowledge of the historical and present financial responsibilities
* Working knowledge of responsibilities in the OP
* Working knowledge of RC handbook

It was brought up that Jonathan (VP) was overstepping, and that this meeting should’ve been organized by Kahena (President).

Jonathan responded and said, this meeting is in fact, part of the VP duties as spelled out in Policy File. After the call, he sent an email to the EC citing the exact language in the Policy File:

"Here's the language in the Policy Files re: the person in charge of unit chairs/cochairs:  
  
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"Unit Chairs serve a three-year term. **Nominations are made to or by the Vice-President, who is responsible for arranging a vote by the Executive Committee in a timely manner.** Nominations should include a statement of the individual’s willingness to serve a three year term and a current resume or CV." Plus, "Renewals are handled by the VP."

As such, I want to be clear that I did perform my duties today, and did not overstep on Kahena. Moreover, Kahena was not slacking on her duties either."

Meeting adjourned at roughly 3 pm.