

**CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION/
SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE POUR L'ÉTUDE DE LA RELIGION**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING / ASSEMBLÉE ANNUELLE

Vancouver, BC

University of British Columbia, FNH 60

June 1, 2019 | 14:00–16:00

AGENDA/L'Order du Jour

Executive Present: Ruby Ramji, Ted Malcolmson, Paul Gareau, Heather Shipley, Michelle Folk, Sharday Mosurinjohn, Roxanne Korpan, Catherine Caufield, and Qamer Hameed

Executive Regrets: Samīkṣā Munro, Paige Thombs, Alyshea Cummins, and Arlene Macdonald

Members Present: Bertha Yelman, Margie Patrick, Erin Reid, Paul Bramadat, Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme, Mark Chapman, Paige Thombs, Dagmar Schwerk, Chris Miller, Christopher Austin, David Feltmate, Daniel Boswick, and Sana Patel

1. Welcome/Bienvenue

Start time: 14:15

2. Adoption of the Agenda/Adoption de l'ordre du jour

MOTION: *Accept the agenda.*

Moved: Paul Bramadat Seconded: Margie Patrick

Motion carried unanimously

3. Adoption of the minutes of the 2018 meeting of the Annual General Meeting/ Adoption du procès verbal de l'assemblée annuelle 2018

MOTION: *Accept the minutes.*

Moved: Ruby Ramji Seconded: Sabrina Jafralie

Motion carried unanimously

4. Business arising from the Minutes/Suivis aux procès-verbal

Suggestion from David Feltmate recommending the CSSR use the open source *Humanities Commons* instead of *LinkedIn*. Suggestion is taken into consideration.

5. Reports/Rapports

i. Membership Secretary/Secrétaire des membres (Catherine Caufield)

Update

Current Membership 113 total; 52 regular and 44 students.

Regular membership is decreasing (down from 133 in 2018). Lost senior members as well as members without CSSR support. Need to engage mid-range academics and students.

Discussion

Need for discussion between CSSR panelists and members.

ii. Treasurer/Trésorier (Ted Malcolmson)

Update

Account Status: 2018-19

Income

Community Account: \$33,719.25
Investment Account: \$65,024.16
Investment Gain: \$1,548.97
Membership Dues: \$9,717.00
Total Income: \$13,600.97

Income: Increased the amount taken from investments as was voted at last year's AGM, and to compensate for the relatively high deficit last year. Membership dues fluctuate in response to the location of the AGM. The BMO investment income took a dive.

Expenses

Website Hosting: \$641.93
Executive Travel: \$2,400.00
Total Expenses: \$19,038.70
Deficit: \$6,000

Expenses: The AGM travel budget has returned to 5,500 from 6,500 because the three-year increase to that amount has elapsed. The Executive travel has increased from 1,000 to 3,000 based on the vote at last year's AGM. We cannot foresee the costs of catering and accommodation from universities at Congress. Major cost changes: website, executive travel, AGM, and student travel and accommodation.

Discussion

We talked about the 2007–2008 rise in membership in contrast to the current decline. We also recognize our priorities for funding students before professors.

iii. Programme Chair/Présidence pour le programme (Michelle Folk/Qamer Hameed/Paige Thombs (LAC))

Update:

Special thanks to Paige Thombs for assistance at UBC.

High number of applications with fewer withdrawals; withdrawals were made with regret to scheduling conflicts. Many panels where the *author meet the critics*. Finding chairs is always a challenge. Trouble with AV regarding logging out. We also need a CSSR email address to accommodate programming work and keeping a digital record. Ruby mentions one made for Twitter account.

Breakdown of Events:

- 54 individual papers with 56 presenters (2 papers are being presented by 2 people): grouped into 19 panels.
- 8 panels, 9 roundtables, and 1 workshop
- Institutional affiliation: 43 institutional affiliations, 2 independent scholars, and 1 high school student.
- This accounted for 98 people in total participating and membership status was 35 paid regular members, 1 paid associate member, 3 paid student members, and 59 N/A as of January.
- Room bookings: President's reception at *the Pit in the Nest*; meeting spaces at *Food, Nutrition, and Health Building*; graduate luncheon held at *Ideas Lounge*.
- Craigie Lecturer is Dr. Marvin Sweeney, Professor of Hebrew Bible at Claremont School of Theology, hosted by the CSBS. CSSR will be hosting in 2020 and will need to begin planning in the coming months.

Discussion

No discussion.

iv. Graduate Students/Étudiants des études supérieures (Roxanne Korpan)

Update:

No change to the student ambassador program. We have 17 students. It is low commitment and good experience. There is a lot of work organizing and the student ambassadors help with keeping in touch with student body. Roxanne is happy to have served as Graduate Student Member-at-Large for the past two years.

Graduate Student Luncheon

Graduate student luncheon will take place at the UCLL Ideas Lounge from 12:15–14:00 on 2 June, 2019. Dr. Pamela Klassen (UofT) is leading a conversation about academic writing. Thank you to Qamer and Michelle for their work.

Student Professional Headshots

Having professional headshots in collaboration with Marie-Josée Blanchard from CCSR. Asking if there were a small honorarium for Brigidda Bell, photographer. Maybe \$50. This program is very popular and the photographs are amazing.

Discussion

No discussion.

v. Communications Officer/Agente des communications (Samīkṣā Munro)

Update

Nothing has changed too much since our last executive meeting in March 2019.

- We ran into issues with our website, which was being bombarded with thousands of hits. We moved our entire website from HostPapa to Bluehost.
- Sunflower is running smoothly. Catherine streamlined the SAGE membership transfer. Thank you for your work.
- CSSR weekly newsletter is working great through Mailchimp. We have 548 people signed up and we can see who opens their emails to read the newsletter. Thanks for using this platform. But Twitter and Facebook are also being used for dissemination. Thanks to send info to her, Alyshea for Twitter, and Ruby for Facebook.
- “SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER” option is still on our website’s home page as well as under the “Connect” menu. This includes friends of the CSSR: non-paid members.

Discussion

David Feltmate asked if it were possible to allow CSSR members to upload digital files of author works to CSSR website. Or would the cost of hosting be prohibitive. We can look for alternative ways of hosting our material from members. This is good suggestion to look at soliciting from our membership.

However, there are many inactive memberships on the CSSR website. You can also include a link to an outside website. We just want to maximize our membership and get people’s search items linked to the CSSR. But membership does not necessitate engagement.

vi. President/Présidente (Heather Shipley)

Update

Thanked the executive for time and efforts in helping the CSSR. Thanking Samīkṣā for the work she does on the website, especially in a difficult year. Thinking about the role of the CSSR in promoting and supporting our academic field.

CCSR has also reinstated their practice of inviting department chairs from SRS departments across Canada to a meeting at Congress. These national initiatives further our conversations with CCSR about how to spread requests across our member societies. Please attend the CCSR AGM on June 3 to find out more about their activities.

A main activity at AGM is to review the CSSR Constitutional Amendments:

Article V: Executive

Motion: David Feltmate
MOTION CARRIED

Seconded: Sharday Mosurinjohn

Proposed Amendment

- Start with constitution
- Section 1.b. = Specified *Recording Secretary* and *Membership Secretary*
- Section 1.d. = Dedicated Graduate Student *Member-at-Large*
- Section 1.e. = Two Conference Program Co-Chairs for three-year term

Discussion

- Fix the grammar on *a member*
- Asked how many Members-at-Large in total; three in total
- The other MAL do not do programme chair work

22 yes; 0 opposed; 0 abstention

MOTION CARRIED

Article VI: Conflict of Interest

Motion: Ruby Ramji Seconded: Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme

MOTION CARRIED

Proposed Amendment

“To be eligible for Executive Positions elected members of the Society must not also be serving as Executive Members of the parent society, Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, concurrent to their position with the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion.”

- This amendment is about affirming CSSR as an independent learned society
- You can only serve on the executive of one society at one time
- Most boards have such limitations on service in their constitutions

Discussion

- Do we leave it as it is written in the amendments?
- Someone asked if there is a conflict
- Ruby responded yes due to the vote between society membership and the CCSR
- Question of equity
- This, again, speaks to the confusion of roles between CCSR and CSSR
- The CSSR has a vote at the table in order to vote for or against decisions from the CCSR
- CSSR must retain common goals

Motion: Ruby Ramji Seconded: Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme

22 yes; 0 opposed; 0 abstention

MOTION CARRIED

Article VIII: Elections

Motion: Ted Malcolmson Seconded: David Feltmate
MOTION CARRIED

Proposed Amendment

“4. The Past-President shall receive a slate of nominees from CSSR members for the Executive and such other positions as are required by Article V of the Constitution.”

- This amendment is to affirm the past-president is charged with receiving nominees
- This still allows people to nominate from the floor at the AGM

Discussion

- Will there be an official date?
- We posted on the website and out to the membership
- We need to know at what point they need the slate
- The slate cannot have a date for it
- But we will start posting in the Fall

22 yes; 0 opposed; 0 abstention
MOTION CARRIED

vii. Past President (Ruby Ramji) *Update*

CSSR and Future of Field of Religious Studies

CSSR is having discussion with RS chairs to talk about the future of our field. We want to do the same in helping moving the discussion forward. We need to talk more about the reality of Religious Studies degree and scholarship moving in areas outside academia. We're not tapping into that: #altjob.

As this is the reality of our executive, the same is true of our regular members who are also in variety of different fields. What are the strategies we can do? Put forward this as a Congress discussion beyond academia. CSSR is interested in hosting this discussion embedding it in our conference program. How do we use our listserv? Do you know a speaker that would work? We can use our conference program differently. Membership drive: finding different ways to connect with people outside of academic circles. What are some of the ways that we can do that? We will reach out to the membership for ideas and make changes

Discussion

Suggestions for Improving Membership Engagement

Need to generate more workshops on non-academic research. Note that non-academic jobs remain academic work; it is tricky. Workshops on community-based research. How do you invite people who are outside and cannot pay? We have a lower fee that engage in this. It is difficult to get exemptions for them. It would be great that Congress to defray these costs.

How do we get more people involved? AAR is so expensive. We have lost all of our senior scholars. Our graduate student membership is increasing. Travel funding is great; thinking how we can support them. Thinking of the categories of our membership in making it even more accessible to folks. Looking for a diverse audience. Maybe work with other associations. Can we see that, if people are paying elsewhere, they can have a reduced rate for other societies? Note that we are the only society has a category of partner (\$0)

We need to consider making a new category of CSSR (i.e., Friends of the CSSR); we need to have a motion to do so. Like a post-membership situation. Looking to pitch suggestion to the Federation (Congress) for this kind of informal interaction. If they can support, that would be great. It is an important approach to CSSR work of Reconciliation.

CSSR Executive Nominations

Positions are open at the CSSR AGM. We need to post the positions on our listserv and website. These positions are for everyone. All nominations can be sent directly to Ruby or declared on the floor of the AGM. No further nominations have been received and none received from the floor.

The nominations::

- Recording Secretary: Paul Gareau. No other nominations received. ACCLAIMED
- Membership Secretary: Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme. No other nominations received. ACCLAIMED
- Member at Large: Alyshea Cummins. No other nominations received. ACCLAIMED
- Graduate Student Member at Large: Sana Patel. No other nominations received. ACCLAIMED

viii. Student Essays/Essai étudiant (Arlene Macdonald/Sharday Mosurinjohn)

Update

Essay Winners for 2018–2019

- MA: Connor Thompson (University of Regina)
- PhD: Lucie Robathan (McGill University)
- BA: Justin Bulicz (Dalhousie University)
- BA: Suzanne Bonfils (McGill University)

ix. Past President (Ruby Ramji)

CSSR Book Prize Committee

Committee Members: Ruby Ramji, Qamer Hameed, and Michelle Folk. 12 books were nominated this year. Our winner for 2018 is Dr. Lori Beaman for her book entitled, “Deep Equality in an Era of Religious Diversity.” She cannot attend, but is honoured with the award. Any books written from 2017 to 2019 can be re-submitted for 2019–2020. Arlene has already volunteered to be on the 2019 Book Prize committee. 2019 books are due to the Past President by December 31, 2019. This year we are only accepting first book publications. After every three years, only first published books are accepted for submission to the CSSR Book Prize competition. Last rounds of regular submissions were 2016, 2017, and 2018. Last round for first publications was in 2015 and previous to that in 2011.

x. Allied Association:

No speakers

8. Other Business/ Varia

The Centre for Civic Religious Literacy/ Le centre de littératie religieuse civique (CCRL/CLRC) is developing a Canadian version of the AAR’s guidelines for teaching about religion public schools. They seek to work with CSSR to obtain funding and a publication collaboration with its membership. Ideally, this publication would be a 40-page guideline to support K-12 teachers across Canada on how to teach civic religious literacy. Religious literacy is defined as:

- i. Understanding the **diversity in and between** religious, spiritual, non-religious, moral, and other worldviews among individuals, groups, and traditions

- ii. Recognizing the **non-static nature** of religious, spiritual, non-religious, moral, and other worldview traditions
- iii. Understanding each religious, spiritual, non-religious, moral, and other worldview tradition **from its own distinct worldview and not through the lens of another tradition**
- iv. Recognising **Indigenous spirituality** within a discussion of spirituality overall, and perspectives of specific Indigenous communities in Canada

Canada has no education resources on this subject, with the exception of the EAP program in the province of Quebec. Also, there is little to no policy for university training of teachers on religious literacy. Literacy is needed for the following:

- i. Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
- ii. Rising anti-immigrant sentiment in Canada and abroad (i.e., Yellow-Vest)
- iii. Canadian multicultural framework

Key contacts for the collaboration:

- Erin Reid, Ph.D. Candidate, McGill University (er@ccrl-clrc.ca)
- Dr. W. Y. Alice Chan (ac@ccrl-clrc.ca)
- Dr. Sabrina Jafralie (snjafralie@gmail.com)

Discussion

Provinces are exclusive jurisdictions; how are you going to get this into hands of people?

We need to look at each situation and engage the provinces to implement these tools. We need tools like this. The conversation is beginning. The CCRL/CLRC is unique because it is made-up of Religious Studies academics and educators.

Religion as a subject is not a teachable. How will you convince the provinces on including this program of study into their curriculums?

We need to look at teachers' college. Showing how religion is engaged in different provincial contexts/jurisdiction. It will be a case-by-case scenario.

How is it going to be organized?

Working on guidelines: thematic approach to entice provincial implementation. Quebec is great example for programming, but implementing is another story.

How imagine dealing with teachers dealing with the lovely bits of religion?

It is a long road. But it is about starting conversations about the importance or necessity of religious literacy. We are going to show how this curriculum can be integrated into current teaching. It is better we have this in teachers' hands to they have the tools necessary to speak of literacy.

9. Reminders/Rappels

Student Headshots & Networking Session

June 3rd, 12:15 to 14:15, FNH 30

Graduate Luncheon

Saturday June 2nd, 12:15 to 14:00, UCLL Ideas Lounge

Presidential Reception/Réception présidentielle

June 1st 17:00–19:00 AMS Nest | the Pit

Enjoy a free drink and hors d'oeuvres (along with a cash bar)

Announcement of Book Prize and Student Essay Prizes

[sessions may be videotaped]

CCSR AGM

June 3 12:00–12:30 BUTO 323

Paul Bramadat: CSRS

Offer fellowships and all sorts of things

Fertile intellectual space

Website: <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/csrs/>

10. Adjournment/ Levée de l'assemblée

MOTION: Move for adjournment

Moved: Davide Feltmate Seconded: Erin Reid

Motion carried unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 16:20