

CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION / SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE POUR L'ÉTUDE DE LA RELIGION  
PROCÈS-VERBAL DE LA RÉUNION DU CONSEIL / EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

24 MAY 2009

Carleton University, Ottawa

**Present:** Alain Bouchard, Mark Chapman, M. Desjardins, David Feltmate, Chris Klassen, Francis Landy, Richard Mann, Rubina Ramji, Donna Seamone

**Regrets:** Peter Beyer, Janet Gunn

1. **Welcome / Bienvenue**

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. M. Desjardins welcomed all members to the meeting and thanked them for their work throughout the year.

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

The Agenda was adopted by consensus.

3. **Adoption of the minutes of the May 2008 meetings of the Executive Committee / Adoption des procès-verbaux des réunions du conseil de mai 2008.**

**MOTION** to approve R.Ramji/R. Mann (carried).

4. **Business Arising From the Minutes / Suivi aux procès-verbaux**

The President announced that all outstanding items would be covered under Reports.

5. **Reports / Rapports**

5.1 **President / Président**

**a) Status of SR.** M. Desjardin presented a summary of the issues related to discussions of *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* for the past two years, forecasting the discussion of this issue at the AGM and the meeting of the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion later in the week. F. Landy circulated the proposal for Sage publishing to publish SR for perusal by the executive. He made some additional comments clarifying the specific contours of the negotiated agreement with Sage. M. Desjardins highlighted that the main impact for the CSSR will be how membership in the society is handled especially as regards money transfer to the corporation and the subscription list. Noted as well was the Federations future plan for integrated management of memberships. M. Desjardins noted the need to work with the new membership secretary to make this transition.

**MOTION:** That the executive of the CSSR recommends that the membership support the proposal by Sage Publications to take over publication of SR. F. Landy/A. Bouchard. Carried unanimously.

**b) Policy matters** M. Desjardins related a reminder received from D. Seljak regarding a past decision taken by the society that presenters on a panel should not all be from one institution (not more than 3). This led to an extended discussion of policy matters and the suggestion that a policy manual should be compiled.

**c) Website** M. Desjardins reported that little progress has been made with website matters. This remains to be done.

**MOTION** R. Ramji/C. Klassen (Carried): That the CSSR executive be expanded by one member, at large position: "technological liaison", with special responsibility for electronic presence on the web and dissemination of information.

5.2 **Treasurer / Trésorier**

Richard Mann reviewed the annual Treasurer's Report. This report was presented in two parts: Part One provided explanation of the past budgetary year and PART TWO provided a justification for the budget. The several forms attached to the report included: chronology of income and expenses (includes expenses from 2005-2009); budget comparison for 2008-2009; register report of all transactions between 1 May 2008 and 30 April 2009; summary of the income and expenses for the past fiscal year and category reports.

R. Mann highlighted issues such as the following:

- **Losses.** There was a total loss of \$5,822.46 for the 2009-09 fiscal year. Operating Deficit \$2,813.51 and an Investment Loss of 3,008.95.
- **Travel funding.** Attention was drawn to the travel funding from SSHRC and the treasurer suggested that next year membership dues should be discussed since it takes a year to change them.
- **Closing Balance.** The treasurer commented on the closing balance for the year Total "on the books" \$58,378.29 explaining the make-up of this balance in operating funds and investments and offered his assessment that the society is relatively healthy financially.
- **Audit.** There has been no audit for some time is at all. The treasurer will follow up on this issue with a consultant or the comptroller at Carleton.

**MOTION** R. Mann/C. Klassen (carried). "That the books be closed for 2008-09 year and that the proposed budget for 2009-10 be adopted as circulated.

5.3 **Membership Secretary / Secrétaire aux admissions**

Mark Chapman highlighted the following issues:

- Membership numbers of the association are stable.

- Produced a revised copy of brochure and our one page ad (in French and English), which was used to advertise the CSSR/SCÉR.
- The website could use an update. Several areas that would benefit from a refresh include: the style of the website, the very static nature of the site (e.g., information does not automatically update), the lack of links to other sites relevant to our members, and the lack of content (e.g., member publications, regular conference listings).
- Things that need to be addressed in the future
  1. Implement a new website with a cleaner design and more information of use to members
  2. Redesign our promotional literature to better reflect contemporary design
  3. Redesign the Bulletin to a format more appropriate for onscreen viewing

#### **5.4 Nominations Committee / Comité pour les nominations**

The nominating committee this year was composed of Dr. Peter Beyer, Dr. Michel Desjardins and Dr. Mark Chapman. The nominating committee has nominated individuals for the positions of Member-at-large, Graduate Student Member-at-large and Membership Secretary.

- Member-at-large: Alison Marshall, 3-year term
- Graduate Student Member-at-large: Aldea Mulhern, 2-year term
- Membership Secretary: Michael Wilkinson, 3-year term

To remove the following statement from the Membership Secretary Job Description and add it to the Past-President Job Description: "To chair the Nominations Committee (composed of: Membership Secretary/Past-President and two other Executive members), and to provide the Executive with a list of nominations for each vacant position to be filled at the AGM, at its meeting prior to the AGM"

Executive members received the recommendations of the nominating committee with thanks to the committee members for their work.

#### **5.5 2009 Programme Chair / Responsable du programme 2009**

Chris Klassen noted the following highlights:

- deadline for submissions for program extended from Jan. 12 to Jan. 22 because of low numbers
- Alison Marshall agreed to assist in putting the program together
- final program details: 63 regular papers in 22 sessions; 1 special paper; 6 prepared panels; 5 roundtables; 1 full-day colloquium (on Islam, Pluralism and Globalization): Total 124 presenters
- requested funds from the Congress and local universities to help fund the Craigie lecture. The Congress is supplying \$600 and University of Ottawa's Religious Studies department is supplying \$100. The Craigie lecture will be given by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine on "Resurrecting Late Judaism: Archaeology, Analysis and Apologetic" on May 25, 19:30

Lastly she noted problems with room bookings. Originally the organizers had put us in multiple buildings throughout each day. I managed to convince them to get us into the same building for at least one whole day. They could not give us the same building for the full 4 days, we have a different meeting room for CSSR members each day.

#### **5.6 Student Essay Awards / Prix pour les essais des étudiant(e)s**

##### **5.6.1 Undergraduate Essay Contest / Concours d'essai pour les étudiant(e)s du 1er cycle**

David Feltmate reported that the Undergraduate Essay Contest received twenty-three submissions in 2009, with two papers disqualified. One paper was disqualified because it was submitted by a graduate student and another because it was written by a high school student.

The winning essay was: "Re-considering the Utility of Goddesses in Religious Feminism: An Examination of Candomble in Relation to Hierarchical Theism and Egalitarian Nontheism" by Dakin McDonald of Acadia University. The runner up was: "Children Dining at the Lord's Table: A sociological Analysis of Mennonite Communion" by Raymond J. Taylor of the University of Waterloo.

##### **5.6.2 Graduate Essay Contest / Concours d'essai pour les étudiant(e)s du 2e cycle**

R. Ramji announced that there were 13 entries in the graduate essay competition, Although the papers, especially the top four were of very high caliber. the top four papers. She noted the vast difference between Masters and PhD student submissions. Ramji suggested that in the future the CSSR consider creating two categories for the graduate student essay competitions with one prize at the M.A.level and one at the Ph.D. level.

**FIRST PRIZE WINNER** \$700 Amarnath Amarasingam, Laurier-Waterloo PhD in Religious Studies. "Religion and Ethnicity Among Tamil Youth in Ontario"

**SECOND PRIZE WINNER** \$300 Matt Sheedy, Memorial University of Newfoundland. "Religion in the Public Sphere: The Limits of Habermas' Proposal and the Discourse of "World Religions"

Special Mention: Sean Otto, Wycliffe College. "Kenosis – Theosis: Gregory of Nazianzus' Christology and the Bible"

**MOTION** R.Ramji/D. Feltmate (carried). That we create two contests in the Graduate Essay contest: the first prize winner will be a Ph.D student and the present second prize will be a prize for a Masters student.

**MOTION** F. Landy/R Ramji (carried). The Executive accepts the recommendations of winners of the undergraduate and graduate essay competitions as presented.

**5.7 Student Representative / Représentant des étudiants**

Janet Gunn submitted a written report on her activities:

- Organized and hosted the Annual Student Luncheon at the CSSR 2008 Annual Meeting. The theme of this event was “Strategic Planning for Graduate Students”.
- Established the Facebook Group “Student Members of the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion (CSSR)”. At the time of writing this group has 123 membersCo-ordinated the installation of a “Canadian Corner” in the student lounge of the 2008 American Academy of Religion meetings in Chicago. This information table provided CSSR brochures and one-page flyers as well as back copies of SR.
- Co-ordinated and hosted a Canadian pub night for CSSR student members at the 2008 American Academy of Religion meetings in Chicago.
- Submitted regular quarterly reports to the Bulletin.

Continued role as liaison with graduate student departments nationwide, distributing CFPs and other relevant announcements via e-mail lists. Updated list of contacts where necessary.

**5.8 CSSR Web Site / Site Web de la SCÉR**

Discussed under 5.1 above. M. Chapman emphasized that the website needs refurbishing and development.

**6. Local arrangements representative Congress 2009**

Peter Beyer announced that there was no report and announced the locale for the annual dinner..

**7. Other business / Varia**

**7.1** There was tentative agreement, depending on the results of elections at the AGM, that the program chair for the 2010 meeting of the CSSR will be a yet to be determined executive member assisted by R. Ramji.

**7.2** Though there was no motion at the meeting but there was agreement that C. Klassen will be responsible for the graduate student essay competition and David Feltmate will be responsible for the undergraduate essay competition.

**8. Adjournment / Ajournement**

**MOTION** C. Klassen/ Everyone (carried).

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully and finally ☺ submitted,

Donna L. Seamone