

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Cindy May TS-SIS Chair**  
**FROM: Jolande Goldberg & Regina Wallen, Co-Chairs Ad Hoc Committee**  
**SUBJECT: Quarterly report of work**  
**DATE: February 23, 2005**

This memorandum summarizes the recent findings of the *Technical Services Special Interest Section Joint Ad Hoc Committee on Annual Meeting Programming*. Discussions and exchanges between Committee members, who represent several AALL SISs and Committees, were monitored since November 1, 2004, the date the Committee began its operations authorized by the TS SIS Executive Board.

### 1. History Leading to the Ad Hoc Committee

The issues concerned and explored are (1) the dearth of programming for TS librarians during the AALL annual meeting, (2) the “no-conflict” rule imposed by AALL for annual meeting scheduling, and (3) the acceptance of programs proposed by TS SIS. The latter two points pertain to issues common to various other SISs as well.

In response to the August 27, 2004 memorandum that TS SIS Chair Cindy May sent to the AALL Executive Board, President Tory Trotta, and AMPC, concerning the San Antonio annual meeting, an open meeting block from 7:45 to 11:30 AM on Monday morning was granted in September as a first and preliminary step; SISs could use it for meetings or programs they deemed educationally important although rejected by AMPC and not considered AALL sponsored programs. Costs and promotion were to be carried by the SISs despite attempts to get publicity through the official AALL program itself.

Thus, for the Annual Meeting 2005, TS-SIS has scheduled 4 "unaccepted" programs in open-scheduling time as a response to the low rate of acceptance of advanced and specialized programs for the annual meeting. Other requests in the memo were too late to be considered for the San Antonio meeting.

Working on the San Antonio programming “grid,” the TS SIS Chair established that so far no additional time for programs or meetings has been gained:

#### OPEN SCHEDULING TIMES

Boston:

Sun. 12-1:15 and 4:15-6:30 = 3.5 hrs.

Mon. 7-8:45, 10:15-11:30, 5:15-6:15 = 4 hrs.

Tues. 7-8:45, 11:45-1, 5:15-6:15 = 4 hrs.

Wed. 7-8:45, 12-1:30 = 3.25 hrs.

TOTAL = 14.75 hrs.

San Antonio:

Sun. 11:45-1:15, 5:30-6:30 = 2.5 hrs.

Mon. 7-11:30 (with one 15 min. break), 5:15-6:15 = 5.25 hrs. Tues. 7-8:45,  
11:45-1, 5:15-6:15 = 4 hrs. Wed. 7-8:45, 12-1:15 = 3 hrs. TOTAL = 14.75 hrs.

However, the concession in itself is significant since it constitutes the precedent for open scheduling, i.e. is a partial relaxing of the no-conflict rule - although Tory Trotta cautioned that she sees no support on this year's board for a change of the no-conflict policy, and that probably there never will be support for conflicts with the Business Meeting.

## 2. **The Original Committee Charge** (posted on the TS SIS Web site)

The Ad Hoc Committee was charged to explore and contribute to *lasting changes* to programming procedures to which of course all "contracting" parties had to agree. Thus, the individual members of the inclusive (and large) Committee were given particular tasks. It was also observed that in order to achieve an Association-level programmatic change, the foundation has to be laid at every level of communication that is submitted, be it to the AALL Exec. Board or President/s, SIS Council Chair/s or Headquarter/s, or the next few AMPC/s. Only if the mechanism for meeting SIS needs is programmatically set in place, will SISs who struggle with conflicting meeting and program hours be spared from dealing with these issues year after year. This was an extremely important point in the discussion, because it was later discovered that this issue had been considered already, but was never implemented.

It also was decided that, considering the make-up of the Ad Hoc Committee, the SIS Council was the appropriate conduit to the AALL Executive Board for the coming negotiations; in a letter to Don Arndt, SIS Council Chair, a short wish list for Saint Louis was laid out:

- (1) To approve SIS program proposals in the order of preference in which they are submitted, provided the proposals are complete and don't entail large travel and/or speaking expenses.  
Lower-ranked proposals that can be combined with proposals from other sources could be an exception to this practice.
- (2) To allow for the Saint Louis meeting open scheduling all day Sunday and Monday morning.  
To avoid the risk of scheduling meetings at the same time as relevant programs, perhaps AALL-approved programs could be added to the matrix before scheduling forms are sent out to the SIS chairs.
- (3) For the Saint Louis meeting, avoid 7am open scheduling, particularly on Saturday and Sunday.

## 3. **Programming and Scheduling as an AALL Issue**

During the background investigation by committee members, the *Annual Meeting Educational Programming Committee Revised Final Report* (Sept. 2002) was obtained together with *Guidelines for Annual Meeting Program Planning* (prepared for the AMPC by the AALL Professional Development Committee, as revised July 2003). The pertinent revision to the

guidelines appears to be that "...the AMPC should consistently provide members with a balance of formal educational programming and alternative educational and meeting opportunities during the course of an Annual Meeting. Recognizing the importance of member participation in SIS meetings, Roundtables, AALL Committees and Caucuses, the AMPC will accommodate additional time blocks to ensure more flexibility for group meetings during the day, not just at 7:00 a.m., the midday/luncheon time slot, and 5:15 p.m."

Obtained at the same time were the *Executive Board Meeting Minutes* of November 2, 2002 (approved April 5, 2003); further the ones of April 4-5, 2003 (approved July 10, 2003) and of July 10, 2003 (approved November 8, 2003). From these it could be concluded that the AALL Board had approved a recommendation that addressed SIS concerns.

Quoting from the text of the minutes of the AALL Executive Board Meeting of November 2, 2002:

"... the Executive Board approved directing all future AMPC - beginning with the 2004 Annual Meeting - to provide membership entities with more flexibility for holding small meetings during educational programs, and to accommodate the needs of membership entities as much as possible, while respecting the AALL no-conflict hours, and to develop and communicate new scheduling guidelines for all entities well in advance of the 2004 Boston Annual Meeting" and that (per Carol Avery Nicholson), "AALL no-conflict hours (such as the Association Luncheon, Exhibit Hall Breaks, plenary sessions and Association business meetings)" in the Board's action did NOT apply to educational programs.

However, for some reason, the decisions were not implemented and did not result in more open time for the 2004 Boston meeting. The Ad Hoc Committee concluded that "... there was either not sufficient oversight by the Executive Board that this decision was properly executed or implemented by AMPC, or that subsequent Boards never knew about the decision, or that AMPC itself never knew about the decision." It was also concluded "... that the 2004 AMPC considered that it had fulfilled this guideline by allowing open scheduling on Sunday beginning at 4:30 and on Monday 10:15-11:30," and further, "that the 2005 AMPC considers that it has fulfilled this guideline by allowing open scheduling all Monday morning, even though the total amount of open scheduling has not been increased at all."

The members of the Ad Hoc Committee observed in general that these revised guidelines, the ultimate result of the Sept. 2002 final report of the Annual Meeting Educational Programming Committee, did not result in an improvement of scheduling at all and did not ensure more time, or more convenient time slots, for SIS professional activities.

In the meantime, one of the Executive Board subcommittees appointed by the Trotta administration is on annual meeting strategies. The Chair of this group, Ann Fessenden, was contacted by TS SIS Chair Cindy May, who also forwarded all the pertinent documents. Ann Fessenden cautioned that there was not much time before the April 2005 Executive Board meeting, but that she will keep the lines of communication open for suggestions and information since their work focuses on "... making the annual meeting respond to all members' needs as effectively as possible."

#### 4. Recasting the Ad Hoc Committee Charge in the Current Climate

Within the framework of AALL's new strategic plan, President Victoria Trotta published an editorial entitled "Sacred Cows" in the February 2005 issue of *Spectrum*, AALL's official organ, in which she challenges the membership to evaluate, or to respond to, six specific questions:

1. What is the best possible conference configuration that will most economically meet member needs while maximizing member attendance?
2. Who should be responsible for selecting Annual Meeting educational programs, and what policies should guide their choices?
3. Where should program proposals originate? Should programs be apportioned among an increasing number of competing SISs and entities? If so, how?
4. How do we ensure that programming reflects the spectrum of continuing educational needs of our members, from novice to experienced, and how do we ensure better overall program quality?
5. How do we balance the educational needs reflected in our professional commonalities with the educational needs reflected in our increased specialization?
6. How can we infuse the Annual Meeting with new ideas and formats and do so in a way that will evolve without disruption to this most critical AALL member program that serves so many purposes?

At the same time, she clarified what appeared to be a number of "misconceptions":

- \* AMPC is not required to award any guaranteed number of programs for any particular entity.
- \* AMPC is not required to award programs based on their ranking by any particular entity.
- \* The structure of AMPC is not geared towards advocacy for specific constituencies (which might, at first glance, be represented by individual AMPC members).

In this light, it seems advisable that the ad hoc committee revisit and adjust its charge. The revised charge will focus on the six points raised by President Victoria Trotta. Cindy May is finalizing the charge and it will be distributed to the committee shortly. The Ad Hoc Committee will then begin its work of addressing and preparing its response to the issues raised. The committee plans to have a draft ready to be presented to Ann Fessenden and the Executive Board subcommittee by the April deadline.