

August 8, 2011

To: Michele Koontz, Administrative Officer

From: Stephani Williams, Nominations Committee Chair

RE: Nominations Report and Final Slate of Candidates

As most of you know, this is the first year that the nominations process functioned with the new committee structure, guidelines and procedures. As is the case with the implementation of any new program or policy, we learned a lot during this execution phase. While there are aspects of the new nominations process that are beneficial to the Society, there are a number of issues that I believe need to be reconsidered.

Advantages of the new process:

- There is a considerable savings of time to the Administrative Office, costs (paper, ink, etc.), and environmental benefits. *In the past we have printed an extensive packet of information for each division chair to help generate the list of names for the slate of candidates presented to the Board (at the old “brainstorming” session).*
- By soliciting candidates via email for several months, rather than brainstorming a list of candidates over the span of a couple of hours, we:
 - Have a far more diverse slate of candidates.
 - Have candidates we know are interested and willing to serve.
 - Should be reducing the work load of the election chair (since candidates know they have been nominated and have agreed to serve, the election chair will be verifying they are still willing to serve rather than “cold-calling”).

Disadvantages of the process:

- The process of developing and ranking the slate of nominees took more than 200 hours: : soliciting names, contacting potential candidates, sending follow-up emails (I sent two or three emails to those who didn't respond), answering questions, making phone calls, verifying current membership, communicating with/updating the committee. *In the two years of discussion and development of the new process, we certainly did not envision it would become this labor intensive.*
 - *In discussion with Michele, we have already identified a few time saving measures for next year.*
 - *In 2010, the Administrative Office added elected positions to both the new member and membership renewal form. Because it was a new addition, and a new process, we did not begin with that list of contacts. Next year, that will be the starting point for developing the slate of candidates.*
 - The first email blast will be sent out following the 2011 meeting. The level of energy and enthusiasm is at a peak in the weeks following the meeting. I have coordinated with Michele and we will send out the first call for nominations around September 1st and will have the online nomination form open so that they can complete the process at that time. Despite the fact that everyone is busy with the start of school, I am hoping to capture the passion for the Society that is at a high during and following the meeting.

- I believe the structure of the committee (3-5 division chairs, a Board representative, and the Chair of the Special Problems Divisions acting as the Nominations Committee Chair), is still in need of reformulating. I believe the committee chair can still actively encourage division chairs to be involved in the process by asking them to send email blasts and include the call for nominees in division newsletters, as well as to personally encourage members of their division to complete the online nomination form. However, in terms of the work that often requires more institutional knowledge, especially the ranking of the final slate of candidates; I do not believe the current committee formulation works to the advantage of the SSSP.

- **Action Item:** I recommend that the Chair remains the Nominations Committee Chair (keeping the Division Chairs involved in the process), and the remaining 4-5 members be appointed by the Board.