

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities and Problems of the APA

The following is the final report from the Committee on Priorities and Problems of the APA

The formation and the methods of the committee

The Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities and Problems of the APA (the CPP) was appointed during the winter and spring of 1997-98, charged by the Board of Officers "to propose priorities for the Association for the next decade and to identify the problems that the Association faces." The Board suggested the CPP "should proceed by gathering information from existing APA committees, from philosophers not currently represented by the APA, from members of other learned societies, from members of the public who have an interest in the practice of philosophy in the USA and from others as it sees fit." The formal charge stated that the committee's report "should be brought to the APA Board of Officers in the Fall of 1998," but the Board Chair's original letter of invitation to committee members made plain that it was at most an interim report that could be expected by that time, and the tentative timetable called for the final report to be presented in Fall, 1999.

The CPP's first meeting took place in May, 1998, in Chicago, in conjunction with the Central Division meeting. Committee activities were begun that summer, and the chair of the committee met with the Board of Officers in October, 1998, to provide an interim report and to request a clarification of the Board's charge to the committee. In particular, it was determined that the Board did not expect, and did not budget for, extensive professional surveys, polls, or samplings of opinion. The committee was expected to gather information in a variety of informal ways and to use its own collective best judgment in identifying problems and proposing priorities for the future.

The CPP did in fact solicit information from many sources and sought to understand and respond to a variety of perspectives:

We wrote to the current and immediately past chairs of all standing and ad hoc committees of the APA, inviting statements of their concerns and also requesting their views about others to whom we should write. (A reminder of our invitation to comment was also circulated.)

We invited comments from APA members through announcements in the Proceedings and on the APA web page.

Various of our members—including always the chair of our committee—met with the Executive Committee of each of the Divisions for open-ended discussions.

We conducted a written survey of the users of Placement Services at the Eastern Division meeting

We distributed a questionnaire to other learned societies—using the entire ACLS directory—and we followed up on a number of groups' responses by conducting telephone interviews with, typically, their executive directors.

Two of our committee members, and the Executive Director of the APA, met together with the Executive Directors of the Political Science Association, the American Anthropological Association, the

Modern Language Association, the Linguistics Society of America, and the Organization of American Historians to discuss common concerns and to delineate organizational differences.

A special CPP "Talk with the APA" session was held at the 1999 Central Division meeting, with three CPP members present, and flyers were distributed at that meeting not only to encourage attendance but also to solicit comments from those unable to attend.

A short (two-page) survey addressed to all members was included in the 1999 2000 dues mailing. The survey aimed to provide a rough gauge of member satisfaction and dissatisfaction with current APA activities and services, to solicit comment about already identified additional possibilities for the organization, and to remind members of the committee's existence and the opportunity to provide more detailed comments.

CPP members tried individually to gather information of use to the committee: through discussions at their own institutions; through conversations with colleagues elsewhere, and colleagues in other academic disciplines; in interviews with publishers; through departmental and alumni newsletters; in the course of program and departmental review at other institutions.

The CPP met in Chicago February 19-21, 1999, and again August 28, 1999, to discuss the significance of the information we had gathered and to reach consensus on a partial draft of the following report. A final draft was prepared after the September 1 deadline for the membership survey and was unanimously approved by the committee.

We are grateful for all the help and cooperation we received in the course of our work- from committee chairs, from other learned societies, from the divisional Secretary-Treasurers and Executive Committees, and from the membership. We offer special thanks to the Executive Director of the APA, who supported the CPP's activities throughout these two years, arranging our meetings, supplying information whenever we requested it and helping us as we refined and pursued our agenda. He also offered his own thoughtful perspective on the issues we confronted, always with the tactful reminder that his perspective was one among many.

Introduction

We found broad support among members of the APA for the purposes articulated in the organization's constitution—"to promote the exchange of ideas among philosophers, to encourage creative and scholarly activity in philosophy, and to facilitate the professional work of teachers of philosophy"—and a generally high level of agreement with the idea that those purposes are served by the sorts of activities specified by the constitution—the "holding of regular meetings," the "publication of the Proceedings, the presidential addresses, and the membership list of the Association," the "work of the standing and special committees." It is perhaps needless to say that various dissatisfactions with the conduct of all these activities were also expressed, but those criticisms must be understood in the context of a strong balance of support for the operations of the APA. We will note some of the more frequent complaints about current structures and practices, but what must be recognized at the outset is that the membership is generally appreciative of what the APA does, and there is much more it would like the organization to undertake.

An enlarged agenda can be seen, in part, as an appropriate response to an enlarged—and more diversified—membership. Moreover, important changes in the environment for philosophy—changes, for example, in educational institutions, in public and private funding, in publishing, in job opportunities—may call for new responses to the old aims of promoting, encouraging, and facilitating the work of philosophers. And developments in communication and information technology influence not only the ways in which standing functions are accomplished but also our expectations about the prospects for new operations and services.

Recommendations

Data collection and analysis

The APA must better track its members and the changing conditions for philosophic work by instituting a much more extensive and on-going system of data collection and management. There are many issues in which the APA might be expected to interest itself—for example, the evidently increasing use of part-time and adjunct faculty, non-academic career options for philosophers, curricular trends in philosophy, supply and demand for new Ph.D.'s, and so on—but where the organization lacks the information necessary to address the issues credibly. Individual members and departments and programs of philosophy often turn to the APA for up-to-date statistics—on the academic job market, the number of new Ph.D.'s awarded, the ethnic and gender mix of the profession, the average time to degree in philosophy, figures on undergraduate and graduate enrollments—and the National Office does its best to supply whatever information it has or can borrow from other reliable sources. But inquiries too often end in frustration because it has to be admitted that the APA either does not collect information of the sort required or it has only out-dated or inferred or otherwise questionable statistics. This state of affairs is problematic for individual philosophers and for students, who may, after all, be trying to ground major professional or career decisions on an informed appraisal of their circumstances. It is problematic for departments and programs of philosophy, for they often need national comparative data in order to understand and prosper within their local academic context. It is problematic for the APA's standing and special committees, which often need better monitoring of the activities or constituencies central to the committee's charge, in order to see where problems may lie and in order to devise initiatives that are most useful. The profession needs a more detailed and accurate account of its members, their activities, the contexts in which members work, and the pressures and opportunities that are presenting themselves to philosophy.

Because of the obvious need for more and better information about the profession and its members, the standing and ad hoc committees do often undertake special surveys, as do various academia consortia and even individual members of the APA. The 1994 survey conducted by the Committee on the Status and Future of the Profession, probably the most ambitious effort to date, required enormous donations of volunteer time; and the difficulties and delays of processing repeated mailings prompted the committee to remark that perhaps "by the next time such a survey is undertaken, the communications revolution will have brought us to the point that it can all be done electronically." Whether or not that point has been reached, it is clearly time for the APA to maintain more current and more complete databases on the profession and to find ways to make these data readily available to its

members. Creating the framework for the continual collection and management of information on the profession will be, again, an enormous task, one that cannot this time rely solely on volunteer labor.

The membership survey disclosed extremely strong support for a radically enhanced commitment to data collection and analysis. Members want the APA to be able to supply current information about the profession when they themselves have a question, when their departments need comparative information, when there are national conversations about higher education or about the humanities. A major initiative on this front would, then, answer a clearly expressed membership demand.

Continual monitoring of the profession would also help the organization itself plan its own additional activities more intelligently. If the APA is to serve philosophers and philosophy, it must know more about all its members and about the contexts in which philosophy is done, about the obstacles and the opportunities that are present and on the horizon for philosophical research, teaching, and practice. The APA will always, through its allocation of limited resources, be assigning priorities to some activities rather than others, and it will attend to some problems but not others. The profession will be best and most responsibly served if the APA's priorities and attention are focused on the actual needs, desires, and circumstances of the membership. This will require a continuing commitment to data collection and management.

Recommendation: The APA should work more assiduously to collect, analyze, and make available data on the profession.

Resources needed: Additional national staff will be required for the APA to establish and maintain up-to-date databases of the quality and in the categories useful to the membership and to the organization.

External relations and advocacy

1) Part-time and adjunct faculty

There is widespread sentiment that academic life is growing worse for many in its service, and there is great concern, in particular, for those who are employed as part-time or adjunct faculty and for those just entering the profession, who may spend many years in a series of short-term, terminal appointments. We do not have good data, specific to philosophy, about the dimensions of these practices (see above, Data collection and analysis), but we received compelling accounts from a number of quarters about the personal and institutional effects of these employment structures; and our member survey suggested widespread concurrence with the judgment that the APA should make greater efforts to address these concerns.

The mechanisms for constructive action are not at all obvious. Many of the problematic trends of restructured academic employment—rolling "visiting" jobs, adjunct and "part-time" work bundled with exploitive salaries and uncoupled from fringe benefits—are affecting not only philosophers, but also many other academics, particularly perhaps those in the humanities, and, in the end, the character and efficacy of institutions of higher learning. Increased reliance on part-time and adjunct faculty also signals eroding support and respect for humanities research. Strategies for amelioration are most likely to emerge from deeper alliances with other disciplinary organizations. The 1997 Conference on the

Growing Use of Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty was a beginning in this direction, but continuing activism will be required and resources must be allocated to address the forces that have produced academic restructuring.

Recommendation: The APA should concern itself more actively with the issue of the use and abuse of part-time and adjunct faculty.

Resources needed: A taskforce with representation from existing APA committees and the National Office can initially be charged to work on this issue and to learn about and cooperate with similar efforts by other concerned organizations. Staff support and additional budgets may be required for identified projects.

2) Public understanding

Focused activism directed at this problem should be coupled with a wider concern about the public perception of philosophy. Many of our members are distressed that the general public seems to know little and to care less about philosophy. A fair number of members would like to see the APA reach out to the lay public with a magazine or with radio, television, or web site offerings. Success with any such ventures would, of course, depend upon the energies of particular individuals with particular talents, but it may be that if specific enterprises of this sort are proposed to the APA, it should consider seriously offering some form of support.

In our committee's judgment, however, apart from the likelihood of these sorts of special ventures, systematic attention to the problem of public understanding must be a priority of the APA. The marginalization of philosophy may not be more severe than it was, say, thirty years ago, but the economic forces affecting education today, especially higher education, make it particularly unwise to rest content with isolation. Part of what is at stake is respect for the value of the discipline, and if philosophy is largely invisible in American culture, few high school and undergraduate students will be attracted to study philosophy, parents and employers will not enthusiastically support those who do, and colleges and universities—so often driven by enrollments—will find reason to direct resources elsewhere. Support for research and scholarly activity—within institutions of higher learning and from public and private endowments—will sink ever lower.

It is not helpful merely to complain about the neglect and misunderstanding; we must try vigorously to overcome them. Again, there are good lessons to be drawn from the experiences and activities of other learned societies. One particularly helpful model, in our view, is found in the American Academy of Religion. Its Committee on Public Understanding grew out of a task force that first identified the "publics" the association should seek to address and then tried to ascertain what would count as working toward "understanding" in those various contexts. The AAR in fact rejected the idea of producing a lay magazine, but it pushed hard to increase the frequency and the competence of media portrayals of topics within the AAR's members' areas of expertise. It developed a media referral service supported by detailed databases on the members' specialties, on the one hand, and, on the other, journalists who write on religion and media that cover stories on or inflected by religious issues. An excellent brochure was prepared for AAR members to help them become adept at dealing with the

media, and an annual award was created for the best effort at increasing public understanding of religion. The award serves not only to encourage this sort of activity among a group of academics who are probably as inexperienced and media-shy, on average, as most philosophers; it also provides, each year, a good model of what works, as it reminds the membership of the importance of continuing this effort.

As things stand, journalists rarely turn to philosophers for comment or opinion. (The one notable exception may be in the area of medical ethics, but even here, and certainly in other areas of value inquiry, philosophers are not always the media's court of first resort.) But philosophers of art could make useful contributions to debates about public support for the arts, philosophers of science to controversies about creationism, philosophers of mind to discussions about the import of developments in computing and AI. There are areas of public interest that could be connected in some way with most philosophic specialties, and the APA could help make audible some distinctively philosophic voices in discussions of these topics. A few of our members, because of individual talent and will, do already make clear contributions to serious public discourse. But more of our members, given the help of a national initiative, could learn to contribute usefully to public discussion at a variety of levels, in a variety of media, on a variety of topics.

Recommendation: The APA should organize a Task Force on Public Understanding and charge it with developing appropriate strategies for increasing public awareness and appreciation of the discipline. Specific attention should be given to forging better linkages with K-12 education and to developing a higher profile for philosophy in the general media. Consideration might be given to specific popular ventures.

Resources needed: A small budget could launch the task force, but sustained attention to external relations and advocacy will probably require continuous supervision and coordination at the National Office, and specific projects in this area will probably require additional funding.

New support for teaching and scholarship

Making more prominent the portion of the APA's mission that is centered on teaching would be responsive to a clear and vocal public demand on academia, and it would accord with a desire often expressed in the member survey. It would be very likely, too, to draw to the APA philosophers who may now feel alienated from or underserved by the bulk of the organization's current activities. The APA needs to do more for those philosophers whose primary activity is teaching.

The APA might sponsor institutes or workshops to help philosophers develop teaching competencies in areas where there is growing curricular interest but where many philosophers may feel deeply unprepared—e.g., perhaps, African and African-American philosophy, Asian philosophy, Latin American philosophy, Native American philosophy, feminist philosophy. Technical developments in some fields of philosophy might be similarly the subject of seminars—the teaching-focused equivalents of review articles—to help acquaint non-specialists, including those who plan to remain non-specialists, with what they need to know in order to responsibly teach these fields. These kinds of teaching workshops could take many forms, from three-week campus-based short courses to seminars held in conjunction with

divisional meetings. Anything like the first would obviously require a substantial infusion of funds to the APA, but the benefits, both direct and indirect, would be substantial. Activities of this sort might be an attractive priority for a capital campaign.

The APA's collaboration with the AAPT is laudable, and it might serve as a model for other forms of collaboration with associations of philosophers dedicated to various special purposes—groups with more specific research interests as well as groups dedicated to teaching. If APA endowments could be built, along with the staff wherewithal to work on fund development and grant procurement, the APA could serve usefully as a small grant or re-grant agency, in order to help more specialized societies—or even departments or individuals—mount special projects connected with scholarship and teaching.

In general—and this is a separate point from the suggestion that more attention be given to teaching—more attention needs to be given to the relation between the APA and the many smaller, more specialized philosophic societies. Many members of the APA belong to one or more other societies as well, and they find that all of these associations serve their interests and needs. Some philosophers, however, have become alienated from the APA, and from the "main" programs of the divisional meetings, and believe that only the special societies are interesting to them and responsive to their needs. And, on the other side, it must be noted that some APA members decry the presence of the group meetings at the divisional APA meetings.

Our committee's judgment is that the APA must ensure smooth working relations with the specialized groups. We think that the groups' presence at divisional meetings helps the reasonable goal of topical and methodological diversity and promotes the APA's original purposes—"creative and scholarly activity", "the exchange of ideas among, philosophers," and assistance to the work of teachers of philosophy.

New sorts of ventures with the specialized societies, in addition to cooperation at divisional meetings—development or grant assistance with special projects, standalone conferences and workshops, etc.—might also allow new and desirable distributions of the benefits of a national disciplinary organization. Special efforts could be made, for example, to situate conferences at smaller schools or non-Ph.D. granting institutions. The aim would be both to serve presently underserved philosophers and to work for new, more productive and mutually energizing relations with the specialized societies. Financial support would be required for these activities, so, again, this is an area where fund development would be crucial.

A capital campaign might also support recognition of the range and diversity of philosophers' interests and achievements by funding prizes and fellowships in a variety of fields. Philosophers give relatively few prizes to each other—a fact that sometimes has to be explained to college and university tenure and awards committees and may work to the institutional disadvantage of our members.

Moreover, we have relatively few options for external prizes and fellowships. Some of the prizes and lecture awards the APA does administer—for example, the Berger Memorial Prize (in philosophy and law), the Schutz Lecture (on topics in the philosophy of history and philosophy of the social sciences, or on phenomenology), the Romanell Lecture (on philosophical naturalism), the Rockefeller Prize (for a non-academic philosopher), the James Prize (for a graduate student or recent Ph.D. writing on American

philosophy), the Hampton Prize (for a philosopher at a junior career stage, working in the areas of ethics, political philosophy, feminist theory, etc.), the Frank Chapman Sharp Memorial Prize (on the philosophy of war and peace)—suggest the ways in which new prizes and awards could help the APA acknowledge and honor the variety of our members' work and could also be used to further a variety of institutional goals.

"Themed" and specialty-specific research awards acknowledge the pluralism of our profession; translation awards would acknowledge internationalism – and might also, e.g., in the form of publishing subventions, help encourage its practice; distinguished service awards could draw timely attention to areas of current organizational interest. Teaching awards—e.g., for curricular or methodological innovation—would not only symbolize the organization's commitment to the importance of this area but could also substantively improve philosophy teaching. Publicity about the particular achievements that merit the awards could provide benefits to all philosophy teachers, in the form of useful, adaptable models.

Other new forms of support for teaching and scholarship, in addition to national and divisional awards, would involve greater exploitation of the new technologies. The APA could maintain on its web site syllabi banks, philosophy-specific teaching tips, even mentoring networks for graduate students, junior faculty, and older faculty exploring areas of philosophy or courses new to them. This would, of course, require substantial staff time and some oversight and expertise, but the potential for widespread benefits to professors, students, and institutions suggests that these might be resources well spent.

Recommendations: The APA should develop additional support—and new modes of support—for teaching and research. Among the options are workshops and institutes (division- or campus-based) aimed at developing special teaching competencies, new ventures with the specialized philosophic societies, outreach to small schools and non-Ph.D.-granting institutions, greater use of the Web site, particularly for teaching concerns, but also for career mentoring.

Resources needed: Some of the existing national committees—e.g., Lectures, Publications and Research, the Committee on the Teaching of Philosophy— can be charged to generate and rank project priorities, but new monies will be required to fund most of these projects, grants, awards. A development officer may also be required in the National Office.

Professional standards

The membership survey elicited strong support for organizational attention to questions of professional standards. This support was particularly strong, and voiced without dissent, in connection with the questions surrounding the use and treatment of part-time and adjunct faculty, but a substantial number of members also voiced grave concerns about tenure procedures, graduate programs, hiring and placement procedures, undergraduate philosophy education, and journal and book publishers' practices. The CPP agrees that there are problems for the discipline in all these areas, but the committee also agrees with some members' expressed judgment that not all of these problems are within the sphere of influence of the APA. Conditions and procedures for tenure, for example, may appropriately vary because of differences in institutional missions, so national standards would not be sensible. Complaints

about careless and slow manuscript refereeing may sometimes be justified, but the APA has no power to force deadlines or quality control mechanisms on editors and publishers—or on its own members who are often the referees.

Still, concerns in these areas are sufficiently widespread that the APA would do well to explore available avenues for attention to issues connected with professional standards. We have already suggested that the use and treatment of part-time and adjunct faculty must be a focus of the organization's attention and resources. Some of the APA's current committees—Career Opportunities, Status and Future of the Profession, Defense of Professional Rights, Philosophy in Two-Year Colleges—should be involved in the effort to address the problems of part-time and adjunct faculty, and, as noted, we see our recommendation for more extensive and better managed data collection as connected to this aim as well. The problems here appear to be sufficiently serious, however, that they call for a dedicated task force, perhaps with representation from existing committees, supported by national staff.

The Committee on Lectures, Publications, and Research is an obvious starting point for the concerns about Journals and book publishers, though other committees—for example, the diversity committees—may also be channels for some of the expressed dissatisfactions, and the national organization may be the natural locus for a unified voice that—with the advice of the committees and members—could speak more forcefully and persuasively to publishers and librarians about how better to serve the profession.

The Committee on the Status and Future of the Profession should begin consideration of most of the other expressed interests in professional standards—concerns with the number of Philosophy graduate programs, with the nature of graduate education in the field, with the character and staffing of undergraduate programs. Here again, the first need is for much more detailed information about current practices and demographics. Securing and making easily available that sort of information may in fact go a long way to answering the demands we found expressed on the survey. Administrators, departments, and institutions want to know how their own structures and practices compare to others. Allowing informed and meaningful comparisons is much more important, and is a more broadly agreed upon goal, than articulating national standards.

It may be, of course, that when the APA has gathered and analyzed a great deal more information than it presently has, it will seem that a more active posture is called for in some areas. There are helpful models in other learned societies of the sort of steps that might be responsive to identified problems—for example, the MLA's publication of the guide, "Evaluating the Mission, Size, and Composition of Your Doctoral Programs." The APA cannot be interested in standardization for its own sake, however; its energies must be directed here by an accurate sense of the current difficulties as well as the differences within the profession.

Another way to help, without appearing to dictate, professional practice would be to sponsor seminars, workshops, and colloquia for department chairs and other administrators of philosophy programs. These could be focussed on issues of hiring, faculty development, tenure, intra-institutional competition, undergraduate education and the major, graduate training, placement, and so on. Providing a vehicle—

or even just a setting—for faculty and programs to learn from one another would be an invaluable, and yet unobtrusive, service.

Recommendation: Existing APA committees and the already recommended Task Force on Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty should respond to the membership's interest, in a variety of areas, in the matter of professional standards. The National Office should facilitate the sharing of information about current professional practices by maintaining the necessary databases, and it should provide new forms of assistance—workshops and seminars, e.g.—to philosophy departments and programs.

Resources needed: We have already noted the resources required for the development and maintenance of useful databases and for the Task Force on Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty. Additional funding would be required to support additional services to departments and programs.

Structural issues

1) Basic divisional structure

Although a few members urged the CPP to recommend either the dissolution of the divisional structure or a transformation that would entail one annual national meeting with, perhaps, additional regional meetings, the membership seems largely to favor the current practice of three divisional meetings. The critics raise a variety of important points: One national meeting might have a higher national profile than three divisional meetings, and might be connected with an organization with a more forceful national voice. The conditions of work and transportation that existed at the time of the formation of the divisions were vastly different than they are now, and flying across the country, to talk with colleagues from around the country and around the world, may now be easier than travelling to an adjacent state. Because our organizational structure is unusual, and all our meetings are called "divisional," some philosophers have difficulty convincing their home institutions to release travel funding earmarked for participation in national conferences. And the pacing required for the support of three divisional meetings is a factor related to the widely criticized matter of the meetings' schedules.

Still, the balance of opinion reflected measured contentment with the three divisional meetings. There were many complaints about timing, particularly about the Eastern Division's meeting schedule, and about the size of that meeting. The suggestion was made that the "jobs"—hence, early winter—meeting be rotated among the divisions, as, say, the Carus Lectures rotate, so that each division has the burdens and the benefits of both larger and smaller meetings, and philosophers from all over the country occasionally have the "jobs" meeting closer to their own home bases. This would undoubtedly cause, as well as ameliorate, certain problems for the divisions. Election scheduling and program committee work would be complicated, while the income disparities among the divisions would be diminished.

The issue of the disparities in resources among the divisions, and the allocation of APA operational costs between, on the one hand, the divisions and, on the other, the National Office is itself a serious matter. Members of the APA from the midwest and west who regularly attend Eastern Division meetings in order to follow the academic calendar on hiring and placement probably do not suppose that their registration fees and their usual patronage of the large book exhibit will produce revenue surpluses tied not to the whole APA but only to the Eastern Division. If they did, there might be more support for the

rotation of the "jobs" meeting. Members disclose confusions about the allocation of their dues and registration fees, and the CPP heard reports of organizational energy been wasted in controversies between the National Office and the divisions over the precise allocation of the costs of the divisional meetings. A 1997 management advisory letter from the firm auditing the APA's financial statements also suggested problems with our internal financial controls and operating inefficiencies associated with our present financial practices and distributions of responsibilities.

A rotating "jobs" meeting would not solve or even address all these problems, and, as noted, such a system would have difficulties of its own. Whether or not, on balance, it is an attractive idea, however, the proposal of such a system is emblematic of a number of creative suggestions offered by the membership about what they regard as problematic features of the divisional meetings. Divisional executive committees would do well to review the comments on the member surveys. It is sobering to find that, while members were largely in agreement that the divisional meetings are a centrally important function of the APA, the meetings were also often cited among services of the organization found least satisfactory. A divisional executive committee member suggested that each of the divisions might consider creating, at the meetings, a regular open forum for member concerns. This would be apart from the regular business meetings—where strikingly low attendance may in fact signal some problems with governance. At such open forums, members would be invited to articulate their perspectives and to share views on the welfare of the division, the larger association, and the profession as a whole.

At present, members evidence some confusion about where to direct suggestions and complaints. One of the greatest benefits of our unique structure is that it allows a high level of participation from members: three executive committees, three program committees, three full national programs of research presentations, three presidential addresses, three separate occasions to host a variety of associated groups' meetings and research presentations. The national committees and the ad hoc committees of the divisions allow yet another range of opportunities for meaningful participation. A downside of the current structure, however, is that few members—sometimes not even those who are very active participants in the organization—seem entirely clear about the organization's structure, about the responsibilities and limits of its various components. This confusion is often expressed in matters related to funding and to meeting quality and character, but the issues go beyond these areas of concern.

Recommendation: The divisional structure should be maintained, but the divisions and the Board should be alert to the perceived problems in this basic structure. In addition, questions should be addressed about the current allocation of revenues between, on the one hand, the divisions, and, on the other, the National Office and about the disparities among the divisions in available resources. We have no specific recommendations about the best solutions here, nor about whether or not constitutional changes should be considered on questions of funding; but the Board must notice and address these financial issues.

Resources needed: None.

2) Transparency and responsiveness

The lack of transparency in the APA's governance and operations contributes to a continuing sense that the organization is an "old boys' "—or now, sometimes, an "old boys' and old girls' "—network, or, alternatively, that it and its resources have been captured by particular factions in the grip of identity politics. The alienation from the organization that these sentiments can engender may not be terribly widespread, but the sentiments themselves are often enough expressed that the problem deserves some attention. It is not a healthy situation if many members of a membership organization find the workings of that organization utterly opaque.

The problem of opacity might be partly addressed through improved communications with members. We recommend, first, a review of current publications. Much of the information that would help dispel some member confusion is published regularly in the Proceedings and Addresses of the APA, but the format of the Proceedings is evidently unattractive to a significant number of members. Some would prefer a clearer separation between what they take to be material of permanent interest—for example, the presidential and the endowed addresses, perhaps the memorial minutes—and material that is ephemeral—calls for papers, announcements of conferences, fellowship deadlines, etc. Many members singled out the membership lists as especially important to them, but the lists might be even more useful if they were separately bound. Information about the structure and operations of the National Office, the Board, the national committees, and the divisions—information about annual deadlines and procedures for participation, about spheres of responsibility and authority—should also be separated and delivered to the membership in a more accessible fashion.

Even if communications are significantly improved, however, the fact remains that the structure of the APA is unusual, and it can be difficult to understand and navigate. This is true not only for those just entering the profession, who may wonder how one can come to serve on an APA committee, but also for well-connected senior faculty, who may wonder, as they serve on an APA national committee, why they cannot do more to influence the program of a divisional meeting. More effective communication may help resolve these kinds of difficulties, for by making clearer the openness and responsiveness of some of the current procedures, the organization will become more truly responsive, more genuinely open to all its members. Still, the complexity and peculiarities of the APA's federal structure will persist and, unless somehow streamlined, will continue to limit the organization's responsiveness to member concerns and to the changes in the environments in which philosophy is practiced.

The cumbersome governance of the organization should be freshly examined. It may reflect general tenets of political prudence that the by-laws of the APA are so difficult to amend, but the fact that there are no nationally elected officers of the APA and the fact that representatives of the divisions must approve all substantial national initiatives may hinder the organization's ability to respond nimbly, credibly, and systematically to genuinely national issues. The APA national committees are often understood to have been organized and to be charged with responding to these sorts of national or profession-wide concerns. But those committees are viewed with suspicion by some members, in part because of their appointed rather than elected composition. Moreover, the committees themselves voiced serious complaints about the organization's structure.

While the membership survey suggested some significant dissatisfactions with the activities and the reports of the national committees, the committees point out that they sometimes find it hard to function optimally, given the procedures they must follow to undertake major initiatives. The committees praise the cooperation and guidance they receive from the National Office, but they feel a lack of support staffing at that level prevents the provision of adequate material assistance with major projects, and they find frustrating the once-a-year schedule of Board deliberations and decisions.

The Board's current structure and staffing pattern have the virtue of insuring distributed geographical representation, and this distributional representation suggests that the Board will bring to bear on its deliberations a variety of perspectives. Still, improvements should be considered. An additional dimension of representation would be produced by including some "at-large" members, individuals selected in national elections. This would not only accord with the perception, so evident in the membership survey, that many of the concerns the APA must address are national in scope. It could also, in the very running of the election, test and focus the interests of the entire membership. Of course increasing the size of the Board might seem to make it even less agile. It might widen the range of views brought to bear on each issue, but—and this seems a problem already faced by the Board—one three-day meeting per year may not afford enough time for a very large group of individuals to become acquainted with the current and proposed activities of a large number of committees, to discuss the merits of these proposals, and to produce and approve specific plans of action.

One remedy for this would be the construction of a smaller subcommittee of the Board, a group charged to work out the details of broad mandates endorsed by the full Board. This subcommittee could, for example, receive requests at any time from the national committees, and could respond to them quickly, within the general confines of the policies adopted by the whole Board. It could serve as a set of official advisors to the Chair of the Board and to the Executive Director as they perform their various duties. The specific action powers of the subcommittee could be delegated to it each year by the Board, but if the subcommittee consisted of, say, a few at-large delegates to the Board, the divisional representatives, the Executive Director *ex officio*, and the Chair of the Board, as chair of the subcommittee, the desiderata of representativeness and responsiveness would both seem to be well served, and served within the confines of policies endorsed by a larger but less nimble deliberative body.

(A subcommittee of this sort might also replace the current APA Budget Committee. This is a small detail, but representatives from other learned societies suggested that the APA might have, or might soon have, a legal problem if it continues to ask individuals who actually manage the organizational funds also to exercise the function of financial oversight. Taking seriously this worry might involve relieving the Executive Director of the job of Treasurer and insuring that officers other than the divisional Secretary-Treasurers examine and approve the APA's budget. The CPP recommends that the APA obtain legal advice on this issue. If the APA is indeed in violation of a legal regulation governing non-profits, or if it soon will be, then of course steps must be taken to comply with the law. Even if there is no clear legal violation, however, the Board should consider the desirability of eliminating the potential for conflicts of interest that this worry about legality suggests.)

Setting up and delegating outlined powers to some sort of subcommittee would not require a constitutional change. Adding at-large members to the Board would. The CPP recommends both these changes, with full knowledge of the slow pace and the practical difficulty of constitutional change. Because of the difficulty of constitutional change, however, we also recommend that the Board consider closely other recommendations for by-law changes that might be yoked to this proposal. We believe, for example, that there are legitimate concerns about the status of graduate students in the APA, including questions about constitutional impediments to their being counted as full members. We will leave it to the Task Force on Graduate Student Affairs to propose specific remedies, but, again, we urge the Board not to shy away from structural changes that will help the APA function more smoothly and effectively in the future.

Beyond the issues of the mechanisms of governance and the opacity of our structures, questions remain about openness and diversity in the APA and, indeed, in the profession. The work, even the existence, of the diversity committees drew heated criticisms from a number of members and strong praise from others. The CPP applauds the Board's expressed commitment to diversity—diversity of philosophical style and interests, as well as gender, ethnic, and geographic diversity. We take seriously, however, the expressed perception of some members that the APA is an "old boys' / old girls' " network, and we urge the Board to find new ways to respond to this worry and new ways to support the diversifying of the profession.

Recommendation: The APA should review its publications, particularly the Proceedings, but also the Newsletters, in response to members' concerns and with the aim of communicating more effectively about the organization's structure and activities. The Board should become at once more agile and responsive and more representative. Including nationally elected at-large members could help, so long as a smaller sub-committee is constituted to help fulfill Board mandates. We also recommend that the Board reflect on and obtain legal advice about its current practices of budget oversight.

Resources needed: There would be some costs associated with holding national elections, and if the Board is expanded, the costs of its annual meeting would be slightly increased. In addition, there would have to be some budget for the meetings and work of the proposed sub-committee of the Board.

Even a small degree of structural transformation will require energy and the commitment to work through rough patches. It is clear that the APA has changed as it has grown, and that the environment for philosophy has changed substantially even in the relatively short period since the establishment of the National Office. The membership survey highlighted for the CPP the great diversity among our members and underscored the fact that we cannot assume an identity of interests or priorities among the membership. Again, although a fair number of members expressed irritation at the organization's apparent embrace of diversity, overall there was strong support for the goal of recognizing and enhancing the diversity of the profession. The CPP has tried to identify priorities that will in fact serve a wide range of our current members, and draw in others, and we have tried to identify some significant obstacles to the satisfaction of the organization's many goals.

Resource issues

We have sketched specific resource requirements in connection with a number of our recommendations. Some of those requirements should be assigned to the operating budget of the APA, and some may be appropriately funded out of specially developed endowments and grants.

Increases in the operating budget will have to be carefully negotiated. Most of the initiatives we propose are national in scope and some will require an infusion or reallocation of funds to the National Office, in the form of salaries for support staff. The Board should also consider the advisability, with an enlarged national agenda, of making the Executive Director's position full-time. This might pose problems for the relationship between the APA and the University of Delaware, and these problems would have to be explored. Space for the office may already be an issue, however, so it would be best to investigate these matters now, to obtain a more realistic sense of available alternatives and a better estimate of the operating costs associated with pursuing some of our proposed priorities.

Many of the initiatives suggested here can, of course, be tied to a capital campaign. We make a final recommendation that the Board appoint a Task Force on Development, first, to work out details on staffing needs and start-up budgets for these priorities, and, perhaps more importantly, to work up strategies for the building of dedicated and permanent endowments. All the existing committees and the recommended task forces (on part-time and adjunct faculty and on public understanding) can be asked to refine priorities suggested here and identify others they also find important, and the Task Force on Development should look for ways to secure funding for approved initiatives. Appeals to interested individual donors, to foundations with specific missions and programs; development of planned donations, bequests, and funded memorials; particular grant proposals—all will be more easily generated when specific initiatives can be projected as the standing priorities of the APA.

Respectfully submitted by Karen Hanson, on behalf on the Ad Hoc Committee on Priorities and Problems:

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