

Report of the Committee on Regions for the Year Ending June 30, 2000

- Governance transition
- Associate Directors role
- Constituency groups
- Congressional interview program
- Quinnipiac chapter resolution
- Progress on the action plan adopted 19 September 1999
- Term limits
- Chair for 1999/2000

Associate Directors

The Committee had a lengthy discussion about the newly-created position of Associate Directors for the geographic regions. The discussion included the election and terms of Associate Directors, whether the terms of Associate Directors should be concurrent or overlap with the terms of the Directors, how and when Associate Directors can replace the Director at meetings of the Board of Directors, and the travel subsidy for Associate Directors to attend the Annual Meeting.

Governance Transition

The Deputy Executive Director referred the Committee to the discussion of this item in the meeting of the Board of Directors. Issues raised by the Committee include, will the new governance structure be evaluated? In general, the Committee felt that Sigma XI should observe how the new structure operates, then concern itself with evaluating it, if necessary.

The timing and number of meetings of the regions and constituency groups was discussed and restructuring the number of members on the Board from any single region or constituency group was discussed. The sense of the Committee on this issue was, to watch what happens over the next few years and then have Board action, if necessary.

Congressional Interview Program

Dr. Bieber advised the Committee that this topic was reviewed during the meeting of the Board of Directors and information on the program also is contained in the information that Directors received in advance of this meeting.

Quinnipiac Chapter Resolution

The Committee had a lengthy discussion about the resolution during which several members spoke against it because in their view the governance in the Assembly of Delegates is the focal point of the Annual Meeting and shouldn't be eliminated because it is the "essence" of the meeting and of a democratic Society. Concern about its negative impact on the Annual Meeting was raised, if governance issues are decided in advance of the meeting. Others spoke in favor of the resolution because more chapters could be involved in the Society's governance.

Directors Role

The Committee discussed the responsibilities of the Directors in leading the discussions within the Regional Assemblies of Delegates and whether the Directors should offer their personal views on an issue, or merely express the pros and cons of the issue as discussed in the Board of Directors. The mechanisms by which suggestions and recommendations from the regions are forwarded to the appropriate committees within the Society and the need for improved feedback from these committees to the Directors on the disposition of these suggestions and recommendations were discussed.

Committee's Action Plan

The Committee agreed it is a broad plan and that additional resources from Sigma Xi are needed for the plan to be implemented. There also was a consensus about the need to increase chapter representation at the Annual Meeting.

A list of 5 items (goals) that the Committee could accomplish in the next year without additional resources was identified. The Committee agreed that one of the goals for the next year would be the establishment of Web pages for each region.

The second goal for the next year is for the Regional Directors to identify individuals within their regions who were elected to Societal or regional offices at the annual meeting, whose chapters received a Certificate of Excellence, or whose chapters received honorable mention for a Certificate of Excellence. The Directors should draft a letter and forward the letter to the Society's President or Executive Director to be sent to the appropriate institutional administrators informing them of the individual's election, or their chapters recognition in the Certificate of Excellence program.

Since many of the Committee's goals in revitalizing chapters are underway within the Committee on Qualifications and Membership. The Committee agreed to establish a subcommittee of Dr. Campbell (Chair), Dr. Ceri, and Dr. LoPinto to work on how the Committee on Regions might work effectively with the Committee on Qualifications and Membership in revitalizing chapters.

The Committee adopted the following 5 goals for the next year:

- Establish a Web page for each region;
- Identify and draft letters to administrators informing them of individuals who were elected to Societal or regional offices, or whose chapters were recognized in the Certificate of Excellence program;
- Based on the recommendations of a newly-established subcommittee, change its action plan to coordinate its activities in revitalizing chapters with those of the Committee on Qualifications and Membership;
- Re-draft the Committee's action plan;
- Each Regional Director should have at least one electronic communication with the chapters in their region.

Committee Chair for 2000/2001:

Dr. Zack Jacobson was selected to be recommended as Chair of the Committee for 2000/2001.

Regional: Suggestions and Reports from the Regions:

Northeast Region: The Directors reported that delegates were concerned about the requirement that chapters have one initiate every two years, particularly for those chapters that may have static memberships, such as industries. Other Directors advised them that an exemption already exists in the Bylaws for non-academic groups on this issue.

Southeast Region: The Directors reported that they received very positive feedback on the poster sessions at the annual meeting, particularly the faculty posters; that there was some concern about materials on the Web site for registration and the Assembly agenda on the Web site; and a suggestion that the Assembly agenda be broken down into which items will be undertaken in which session of the Assembly.

Southwest Region: Delegates suggested that the Program for the annual meeting include the Report of the President, the Report of the Executive Director, the Treasurer's Report and the Audited Financial Statements.

Northwest Region: The region felt that, in regard to the proposed Quinnipiac Resolution, Sigma XI should have electronic voting for Assembly issues but the vote should take place two weeks after the issues are discussed in Assembly; the region elected Lawrence Duffy as Associate Director; and several delegates were concerned over the behavior of some delegates on the floor of the Assembly.

Mid-Atlantic Region: The region expressed support and offered ideas on a possible Web page for educational outreach activities, including K-12 activities, and a suggestion of another award for undergraduate research mentoring that would apply only to comprehensive and baccalaureate college chapters whose members likely are not eligible for the Young Investigator Award.

North Central Region: Delegates expressed difficulty in downloading information from the Society's Web site; others would like a Web-base discussion of issues prior to the annual meeting and establishment of a subcommittee to figure out what the region can do in undergraduate K-12 educational reform.

The Committee met 4 November 1999 and 7 November 1999 in Minneapolis. The attendees were:

Committee Members:

Dr. Bieber
Dr. Campbell
Dr. Ceri
Dr. Geller
Dr. Hays
Dr. Klemm
Dr. Jacobson
Dr. Lange
Dr. LoPinto
Dr. Manduca (7 November only)
Dr. Pita
Dr. Trefny

By Invitation:

Dr. Duffy (7 November only)
Dr. Ferguson
Dr. Whitehead (7 November only)
Dr. Zand (4 November only)

Loran Bieber, Chair, Committee on Regions