Council Minutes

April 13, 2009
Denver, Colorado

Council Members Present:
Arnetha F. Ball (Division K), Nancy Beadie (Division F), Mark Berends (Division L), Linda L. Cook (Division D), Garrett Albert Duncan (Division G), David J. Flinders (Division B), Stephan (Steve) A. Henry (Division H), Joan L. Herman (Member-at-Large), Cynthia A. Hudley (Division E), Carol D. Lee (President-Elect), Richard E. Mayer (Division C), Lorraine M. McDonnell (President), John A. Oliver (Graduate Student Council), Patricia S. O'Sullivan (Division I), Lynne Schrum (SIG Executive Committee), William F. Tate (Past-President), William G. Tierney (Member-at-Large), Linda C. Tillman (Division A), Susan B. Twombly (Division J)

Incoming Council Members Present:
Alfredo J. Artiles (Division G), William C. Ayers (Division B), Faith Connolly (Division H), Vivian L. Gadsden (Member-at-Large), Karen L. Graves (Division F), Kris D. Gutiérrez (President-Elect), Ara Tekian (Division I), Andrea L. Tyler (Graduate Student Council)

Staff Members Present:
Felice J. Levine, S. Claire Slesinski, Gerald Sroufe, Phoebe H. Stevenson

1. Welcome by President Lorraine McDonnell

President Lorraine McDonnell called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. She welcomed Council, incoming Council members, and staff members. Introductions followed. Council members were asked to review the Council roster for accuracy.

2. Introduction and Orienting Information

Council unanimously approved the meeting agenda as presented. Council also unanimously approved the minutes of the January 2009 Council meeting.

3. Report of the President

President McDonnell provided an overview of the theme and highlights of the 2009 Annual Meeting. She commented that because of the meeting's location in San Diego and the current economic climate, the registration count for the 2009 Annual Meeting was lower than that for the 2008 Annual Meeting. She reported on a number of innovations introduced for the 2008 Meeting, including the clustering of Presidential sessions to enhance intellectual coherence, geographical grouping of sessions from the same unit throughout the week to enhance ease of access for attendees, the introduction of working groups with participants meeting before and at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting to share common experiences, and a special performance of "No Child…" by Nilaja Sun.

With regard to the working groups, McDonnell indicated that there had been an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response from attendees wishing to participate in this new and experimental professional opportunity. Because of the large response, AERA was unable to accommodate all those who expressed interest. The purpose of the working groups is to create an opportunity for attendees to meet and interact with other researchers sharing similar interests while attending Annual Meeting sessions related to a specified topic. McDonnell noted that two of the working groups had been organized by divisions and three had been organized by McDonnell and Program Chair Michael Feuer. She indicated that, if participants found the working groups to be a beneficial addition to the program, President-Elect Carol Lee could consider convening such groups related to substantive session areas at the 2010 Annual Meeting. McDonnell noted that participants would be asked to evaluate the experience of being in a group, and their evaluations would be discussed by the Annual Meeting Policies and Procedures Committee.

McDonnell reported on the formation of an informal group, in consultation with President-Elect Carol D. Lee, to assess the Fellows Program. This group, consisting of Joan Herman, Margaret Beale Spencer, and Cynthia Hudley, will report to Council at the June meeting.

4. Report of the President-Elect

President-Elect Carol D. Lee provided an overview of the 2010 Annual Meeting theme, "Understanding Complex Ecologies in a Changing World." The 2010 theme is intended to encourage submissions and presentations that address the conceptual, methodological, and practical challenges and opportunities inherent in understanding how and what people learn across time and space. Lee indicated that the first 2010 Program Committee meeting will be held on the last day of the Annual Meeting. The second meeting was scheduled for May 31–June 1 in Denver, the site of the 2010 Annual Meeting.

5. Report of the Executive Director

Executive Director Felice Levine welcomed incoming Council members and thanked outgoing members for their contributions to the Association. She briefed Council on the results of the 2009 general AERA election and also informed Council of AERA's plans to transition to fully electronic balloting for the 2010 general AERA election. She noted that electronic balloting should facilitate a significant increase in participation by voting members. Levine indicated that, while voter participation was down very slightly from the 2008 election (24.05% as compared with 25.35% in 2008), it is still drastically higher than in 2007 and earlier years (19.13% in 2007).

Levine briefed Council on AERA's membership. As of March 26, 2009, AERA had 21,644 members, which is 15% lower than the membership count as of June 2008. She noted that the count for March reflected the Association's membership status 3 months into the new membership year. Thus it is hard to ascertain yet whether there was a real drop in membership. She pointed out that the transition from an anniversary-based to a calendar-year-based membership year in 2007 had made comparative analysis more difficult. She indicated that once all AERA

members made the transition to a calendar-year-based renewal cycle, more meaningful comparisons would become available. She highlighted additional challenges faced by AERA, like other research societies, such as the increased availability of AERA journals online through universities and other institutions and the adverse impact of the global economic crisis faced by institutions of higher education. She indicated that AERA has been working diligently to develop new and innovative means to attract more members and Annual Meeting attendees. President-Elect Lee stressed the importance of creating an Annual Meeting program that features diverse sessions that provide attendees with many opportunities for participation.

Levine announced that Luis Moll has been selected to give the Sixth Annual *Brown* Lecture in Education Research on October 22, 2009, in Washington, D.C. Moll, Professor of Language, Reading, and Culture at the University of Arizona, focuses his research on the connections among culture, psychology, and education, especially as they relate to the education of Latino children in the United States. Levine also noted that the National Academy of Education will hold its annual meeting in Washington, D.C., coinciding with the *Brown* Lecture. The Coordinated Committee Meeting will take place on October 23 and 24.

Levine reported on the AERA Undergraduate Student Education Research Training Workshop, scheduled for April 13–15. The workshop was co-directed by Linda Cook, Division D Vice President, and George Wimberly, AERA Director of Social Justice and Professional Development. Levine informed Council that there were a large number of applications for the workshop and that the applicants represented a broad range of geographical and demographic backgrounds. Activities planned for the workshop included panel presentations from junior and senior education researchers on topics such as the purpose and structure of the Annual Meeting, applying to graduate school, education research as a field, and pursuing a career in education research.

Levine reported on two grant proposals that were submitted in February to the Foundation for Child Development—both of which were approved and funded. AERA will receive approximately $225,000 for the two projects. The first is a 3-day institute for emerging scholars to be held

in the summer of 2009, titled "Connecting Research to Policy." The second is a small, intensive research conference, "Observational Instruments and Linking Teacher Behavior to Student Outcomes," which will take place in the winter of 2010. McDonnell commended Levine for her effort to obtain external funding to support new initiatives.

Levine also briefed Council on the creation of WERA, the World Education Research Association. With Council's support, AERA is becoming a founding member of WERA. Levine indicated that she and former AERA president Eva Baker were set to represent AERA in the formation of WERA through the end of May 2009 and that President McDonnell will serve as AERA's representative to WERA from June 2009 to May 2010, with President-Elect Lee serving a 2-year term starting in May 2010. Levine indicated that the process of creating WERA was going smoothly, with high levels of participation from approximately 20 educational research associations around the world. A 2-day meeting of WERA is set to take place immediately after the 2009 AERA Annual Meeting.

6. Election of Executive Board Members for 2009–2010

President Lorraine McDonnell provided Council with an overview of the role and responsibilities of the Executive Board and its members. The Executive Board acts to advise Council, makes decisions between Council Meetings at an October meeting or through conference calls, and is advisory to the Executive Director, mostly on financial matters. Some matters are delegated to the Executive Committee—for example, site selection for the Annual Meeting. The Executive Board is also responsible for reviewing and approving SIG and division awards. Overall, the Executive Board exists primarily to examine certain issues in detail and advise Council so as to facilitate efficient and productive deliberation by Council.

Arnetha F. Ball, Linda L. Cook, and Richard Mayer were subsequently elected to serve on the Executive Board for the 2009–2010 year.

7. Special Interest Groups

Lynne Schrum, Chair of the Special Interest Group (SIG) Executive Committee, provided Council with an overview of a proposal to form a new SIG on

Catholic education. The proposal was first submitted to the SIG Executive Committee for review in early 2008. A revised proposal was submitted in October, and the SIG Executive Committee rejected the proposals both times because of significant concerns about the uniqueness of the proposed SIG. The organizers of the proposed SIG and the SIG Executive Committee sought Council's view on the proposal after two rounds of impasse.

Council discussed the merits of the proposal and discussed in detail the substance of the proposal as well as the concerns raised by the SIG Executive Committee. A number of topics were discussed, including the possibility of subsequent proposals to study other kinds of religious education and the increasing number of SIGs in the absence of a mechanism to determine whether AERA should allow new SIGs to form and how many SIGs the Association should have. Some Council members pointed out that Catholic education is global and widespread and that it contributes in important ways to urban education. It was also pointed out that those who signed the petition truly did not have available to them a SIG within which they could explore research issues concerning Catholic education. It was also noted that the petition for the Catholic Education SIG was one of the best, most refined, and intellectually robust that Council had received in recent years.

Motion: To approve the creation of the Catholic Education SIG. Approved, 12; Opposed, 7.

Schrum reported on the SIG Executive Committee's ongoing effort to work with SIGs in the development of bylaws. Schrum indicated that the SIG Executive Committee had reviewed and approved bylaws proposed by the NAEP Studies SIG and the School/University Collaborative Research SIG and recommended Council approval.

Motion: To approve the proposed bylaws of the NAEP Studies SIG. Approved unanimously.

Motion: To approve the bylaws of the School/University Collaborative Research SIG. Approved unanimously.

8. Publications Committee Report on *Educational Researcher*

Levine briefed Council on the Publications Committee's strategic review of AERA's portfolio of journals. She noted that the

Publications Committee had established several subcommittees to focus on specific journals, including *Educational Researcher* (*ER*). Past-President William Tate served on the *ER* subcommittee. Levine further indicated that the subcommittee had undertaken substantial background work and in March 2009 provided a report and recommendations to the Publications Committee, which were subsequently reviewed and approved by the Committee.

Levine emphasized that the change was not in the mission of, or ambitions for, *Educational Researcher,* which would require review and approval by Council, but in how best to achieve *ER*'s goals. The core purpose of the changes was to broaden the types of submissions appropriate for inclusion in *ER* and to eliminate the sectional division of the journal into Features, Research News and Comment, and Book Reviews. The subcommittee felt that the current sections of *ER* were limiting and potentially confusing to authors and editors. The new plan, Levine explained, provided for articles of shorter length that placed more emphasis on research of wide significance. She noted that the shift to less discursive, more focused articles also involved encouraging the online location of additional explanatory or supplemental materials. Levine reported that the 2010 volume year will be a transition in editorship and in the structure of *ER.* She observed that the aim is to expand *ER*'s significance and potential reach through a clearer articulation of its purposes and the range and types of articles appropriate within its overall mission.

Council discussed these forthcoming changes and overall expressed enthusiasm for the ambitions for *ER* and the hope that these changes would greatly enhance its substance and presence. Levine was asked whether there was any implied preference for quantitative research. She indicated that there was a preference for publishing research of broad-based significance and interest, but that the Publications Committee intended no methodological preference, noting that online materials might be especially well suited as supportive material for qualitative research. Council members also observed that the plan to include findings in an article type termed *Briefs* was directed to statistical analysis of extant data. Some members of Council expressed strong reservations about limiting this promising submission type to either quantitative reports or extant databases. Although there was no formal resolution, Council indicated that an expansion of the purposes of *Briefs* was in order. Levine noted that such a change was feasible.

9. Update From the Joint Annual Meeting Policies and Procedures and Research Advisory Committee

Levine briefed Council on the plans for communicating the forthcoming Council-approved changes for the Annual Meeting that go into effect with the 2010 Annual Meeting. She indicated that a number of communication strategies have been put in place, including an article published in the March 2009 issue of *Educational Researcher* which is also posted on the AERA website and was distributed to SIG officers; a session on serving as a peer reviewer directed to graduate students and emerging scholars scheduled for April 15; a special session titled "Opportunities and Changes for the 2010 Annual Meeting," scheduled for April 16, which in particular had been widely publicized; and a special briefing for SIG officers at the three SIG leadership orientation sessions. Levine indicated that the Joint Annual Meeting Policies and Procedures and Research Advisory Committee (called the Joint Committee) was committed to effective dissemination of the changes and ongoing evaluation of them.

Council discussed strategies to improve the status of poster sessions as well as the experiences of Annual Meeting poster presenters and attendees. For example, the Council discussed the possibility of providing examples of high-quality posters online for poster presenters to view, creating awards for best poster presentation, and having previous years' award winners present posters in a special poster session. The goal is to publicize widely the advantages of alternative modes of presentation and their benefits. Council also discussed the potential for holding experimental sessions in a variety of formats, which could create innovative forms for presentation of research.

Levine reported that AERA will also be conducting a survey to collect feedback from attendees of 244 selected paper and symposium sessions during the 2009 Annual Meeting. She indicated that chairs of the Joint Committee had contributed substantially to the design of the survey and review of the sampling plan. The survey focuses on session topics, quality of presentations, session participants (presenter, chair, and, if applicable, discussant), and other issues related to the substance and quality of the sessions. Also, Levine indicated that chairs of paper and symposium sessions will be requested to complete an online information form on sessions that they chaired directly after the Annual Meeting. The form seeks information regarding the quality of the presentations, the level of participation, the role of discussants, the effectiveness of the setting, and related issues important to the substance of the meeting and the experience of the attendees. Levine noted that information collected from these surveys will be reviewed by the Annual Meeting Policies and Procedures Committee and the Research Advisory Committee as they continue to monitor the overall effectiveness and quality of the Annual Meeting. It was requested that the information gathered from sessions sponsored by divisions be made available to the program chairs of those divisions.

Levine briefed Council on the Online Paper Repository. Authors who presented at the 2009 Annual Meeting will be invited to participate in the Online Paper Repository. Participation is on a voluntary basis and will involve presenters uploading their final papers. Starting with the 2010 Annual Meeting, authors advancing submissions will be asked at the time of submission whether they would like to participate in the Online Paper Repository. Levine indicated that the Online Paper Repository will become an important resource to the Association, its members, and the greater education research and scholarly community for years to come.

10. Report on Task Force on IES Reauthorization

Director of Government Relations Gerald Sroufe provided Council with an update on the reauthorization of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). The steering committee for this initiative—the AERA Task Force on IES Reauthorization—was formed after Council's January meeting and met in March 2009. President McDonnell indicated that the members of the Task Force are diverse, committed, and highly engaged. She reported on her participation in the March meeting and

said that she was reassured about the work of the group. Levine indicated that an open meeting on IES Reauthorization will be held on April 14 during the Annual Meeting. This initiative, to be steered by the Task Force, will convene workshops and prepare a white-paper report that could be useful in the reauthorization of IES. Sroufe indicated that, with the upcoming reauthorization of Title I, the reauthorization of IES will be put on hold temporarily. However, he anticipated considerable support and cooperation from Capitol Hill on the reauthorization of IES.

11. Service Recognition for Outgoing Council Members

President Lorraine McDonnell was recognized by AERA and Council for her work as the 2008–2009 AERA President. Outgoing Council Members William F. Tate (Past-President), William G. Tierney (Member-at-Large), David J. Flinders (Division B), Nancy Beadie (Division F), Stephan A. Henry (Division H), Patricia S. O'Sullivan (Division I), and Garrett Albert Duncan (Division G) were also recognized for their work as they neared the end of their terms as Council Members at the conclusion of the 2009 Annual Meeting.

12. Adjournment

Council adjourned at 3:45 p.m.