

# Council Minutes

July 11–12, 2008  
Washington, DC

## Council Members Present:

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), Robert J. Stahl (SIG Executive Committee), William F. Tate (Past-President), William G. Tierney (Member-at-Large), Susan B. Twombly (Division J)

Arnetha F. Ball (Division K) attended by conference call on July 12, 2008.

## Council Members Absent:

Arnetha F. Ball (Division K), Nancy Beadie (Division F), Mark Berends (Division L), Linda C. Tillman (Division A)

## Staff Members Present:

Angela Dean, Felice J. Levine, Gerald Sroufe, Phoebe H. Stevenson

George L. Wimberly joined the meeting at selected intervals.

## Friday, July 11, 2008 (Meeting Day I)

### 1. Welcome by President Lorraine McDonnell

President Lorraine McDonnell welcomed Council 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 2008 Council meetings.

### 3. Report of the President

President McDonnell briefed Council on plans for the 2009 Annual Meeting. She indicated that she and Michael Feuer, AERA General Program Chair, have been working with AERA's graphic designer on a meeting logo and that she was pleased with the progress made. She reported on a briefing by AERA's investment manager, Gregg Auerbach, to the Executive Board on July 10. She continued by highlighting some items that were not on the agenda as action items but were important nonetheless. McDonnell recommended a review of AERA's membership categories at the January 2009 Council meeting. She indicated that some categories, such as International Affiliate, should be eliminated because members in that category pay dues at the same rate as Regular Members but do not have voting rights. She also noted that it would be timely to take up this issue in January 2009 because it could then align with the periodic review of membership dues requested by Council.

At President McDonnell's request, Executive Director Felice Levine provided Council with an update on AERA's 17th Street property. Council recommended that the Central Office explore the feasibility and costs of bringing the property into a rentable condition and update the Executive Board at its October 2008 meeting.

McDonnell noted that the Division D award proposal prompted the Executive Board to discuss AERA's development and fund-raising efforts. She indicated that it would be potentially worthwhile to appoint a subcommittee to explore development opportunities for the Association and its units. She observed that, although development is a long-term issue, it requires careful advance planning.

### 4. Report of the Executive Director

Executive Director Levine welcomed Council members to AERA's new Central Office at the 1430 K Street location. She commented on President McDonnell's last point about the value of long-term thinking and planning for development and noted that it was a significant issue for her as Executive Director in looking ahead for the Association. In welcoming Council, Levine observed that

July was not a typical month for a Council meeting and explained that these meeting dates were the only ones on which all three presidents were available. As a result, four Council members who had scheduling conflicts were unable to attend. Levine noted that the Council meeting dates had been scheduled as soon as the new President-Elect was announced in March. She indicated that, in scheduling future Council meetings, the Central Office will consult with candidates for the position of President-Elect to obtain their availability so that the dates can be set by the end of the prior year.

Levine introduced Executive Assistant Angela Dean and acknowledged the work of the AERA staff in preparing for the Council meeting. President McDonnell suggested that a calendar link be added to the AERA website so that dates for Association events and upcoming meetings can be easily accessed.

Levine reported that the National Research Council and AERA had held a workshop on April 24–25, 2008, entitled Protecting Students' Records and Facilitating Education Research, to examine the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The objective of the workshop was to address how better to reconcile issues of confidentiality and privacy protection with researcher access. Levine noted that AERA will be publishing papers from the workshop. She also noted that AERA had taken the lead among several research organizations in submitting comments in May to the U.S. Department of Education on proposed changes to FERPA and will continue to take on leadership roles and identify opportunities to address these issues.

Levine reported on the AERA Research Fellowship in Education and Adolescent Health, funded by the Spencer Foundation. She noted that this initiative reflected an important joint effort of AERA and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). A cohort of 14 advanced graduate students and junior scholars will undertake research and receive intensive research training in using the data sets from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) and the Adolescent Health and Academic Achievement (AHAA)

Study. The year-long initiative will begin with a meeting of the cohort and the Add Health Users Conference at NICHD in July 2008 and continue through the 2009 AERA Annual Meeting.

Levine informed Council that a three-person advisory working group will be established to evaluate *Research Points*. This group, consisting of one representative each from the Publications, Government Relations, and Communications and Outreach Committees, will look at the impact and strategy of *Research Points*. A report will be presented to Council in January 2009. In the interim, operating expenses for *Research Points* as it is currently constituted will be included in the FY2009 proposed budget, with the understanding that the publication and its operation may change.

Levine concluded her report by thanking Council for its work and engagement since meeting in March. She observed that the group had used and benefited from collaborations by e-mail and conference call to move important agendas forward.

### **5. Review of Proposed Division Bylaws**

Three divisions submitted revised or new bylaws for review and approval by Council. These bylaws were developed to conform to the revised AERA Bylaws, which were adopted by AERA voting members in 2006.

**Motion:** To approve the proposed Division C Bylaws. Approved unanimously.

**Motion:** To approve the proposed Division D Bylaws. Approved unanimously.

**Motion:** To approve the proposed Division E Bylaws. Approved unanimously.

President McDonnell emphasized the requirement that all bylaws be approved by Council. Bylaws that have been previously approved and are in alignment with the new AERA Bylaws will not require further action.

### **6. Report on Division Budget Allocation Formula**

Executive Director Levine briefed Council on the evolution of the current division budget allocation formula, which went into effect in 2004. She indicated that a reevaluation of the formula should be performed to ensure that it is meeting the needs of divisions and the Association. Three possible revised options were presented, taking into consideration the significant increase in division membership (and AERA membership) during the past 4 years and the need to adjust for inflation.

Council discussed the challenge of having adequate resources to fund activities in light of the rising costs for travel and catering. In general, Council was supportive of the third option whereby the base amount (to be determined) would vary according to division membership size and the allocation per member would be adjusted for inflation. Council discussed the possibility of making resources available for divisions, SIGs, and committees to compete for, to support their programmatic activities. Levine indicated that she would interview each division vice-president and determine what would be needed and report back to the Executive Board in October. The Executive Board will then determine whether to revise or reaffirm Option 3, so that the allocation formula can become part of the FY2009 budget planning process.

**Motion:** To approve and accept Option 3 as a division budget allocation formula. Approved unanimously.

### **7. Report on Election and Use of Electronic Ballot**

Executive Director Levine briefed Council on organizations that have adopted the use of electronic balloting, which resulted in an increase in participation during the balloting process. Council discussed the pros and cons of electronic-only balloting, including the need to provide some paper ballots for members who may be constrained by disabilities or other challenges from voting electronically. Deputy Executive Director Phoebe Stevenson explained that special provisions, such as the use of postcard reminders and customized paper ballots, may be used to ensure maximal participation by voting members. The general consensus was to use *Educational Researcher* to communicate with members regarding electronic voting and the opportunity for members who wish to request a paper ballot to do so by contacting the AERA Central Office.

**Motion:** To eliminate the dual option of electronic and paper ballots except for those who request a paper ballot. Approved, 11; Abstained, 2.

### **8. Review and Approval of 2007 Audit**

Council reviewed the independent audit report. President McDonnell reported on a conference call held in July in which she,

Past-President William Tate, and Executive Director Levine discussed the audit with Al Lazure, AERA's independent auditor. She indicated that the audit found the financial transactions and practice to be in complete compliance with generally accepted accounting principles.

**Motion:** To approve the 2007 Audit. Approved unanimously.

### **9. Social Justice Action Committee Proposal on Initiative for Research on Indigenous Education**

Levine provided a brief summary of the work of the Social Justice Action Committee on a research initiative on Indigenous education directed to capacity building in the use of data from large-scale data resources. With the funds approved by Council for a second planning meeting held in May, the working group prepared a proposal for Council's review. The proposal includes a series of interrelated events at the Annual Meeting, such as two professional development workshops and a roundtable focused specifically on the integration of different approaches and perspectives regarding the conduct of research on Indigenous education. In the proposed plan, these meetings will culminate in a presidential session at AERA's Annual Meeting in 2010, and the commissioned papers will be published in a special issue of a top-tier, peer-reviewed journal or an edited book. The working group requested \$55,200 for the three meetings.

President McDonnell indicated that this is an opportune time for the Association to devise a process whereby units can bring forth new ideas and compete for support to undertake new initiatives. Council discussed the need to reach out to Indigenous populations not only in the United States but in other parts of the world, such as the Pacific Islands. Council expects that the proposed project will represent the breadth of interdisciplinary research in this area. Council felt that the part of the proposal that focused on professional development could be addressed as a separate proposal for a professional development course during the Annual Meeting. In addition, noting that the submitted proposal focused on only one line of research with regard to large-scale databases, Council favored a research conference using more than a single database to examine extant research on Indigenous peoples and education,

address gaps in knowledge and future directions for research, and consider infrastructural issues, from funding to data resources to research training and capacity building. Council thought that this broader approach could better advance and stimulate research in this area.

To expand the focus in a timely manner, it was decided that Executive Director Felice Levine and President-Elect Carol Lee would prepare a revised statement and confer with Kris Gutierrez, Chair of the Social Justice Action Committee, who submitted the proposal, and Bryan Brayboy, who serves as principal investigator for the project, to expand the scope of the project consistent with other AERA research conference projects.

### **10. Recommendations From the SIG Executive Committee**

By unanimous consent, Council expressed its appreciation for the work that the SIG Executive Committee had done during the past year. It was agreed that the recommendations brought forth reflected important changes that would bring long-term benefits to SIGs and the Association.

**Motion:** To approve a requirement that all SIG members must be AERA members. Approved unanimously.

**Motion:** To increase the minimum membership requirement for a SIG from 30 to 45 and to give existing SIGs 3 years to reach the 45-member level. Approved, 12; Opposed, 1; Abstained, 1.

Subsequent to Council's approving an initial SIG Bylaws template at its March meeting, a few revisions were presented, including a provision requiring SIGs to conduct their elections as part of the AERA general election. The SIG Executive Committee presented a revised template for Council's consideration.

**Motion:** To approve the SIG Bylaws template. Approved, 13; Abstained, 1.

The SIG Executive Committee asked Council to review the guidelines for preparing proposals for the formation of new SIGs so that the guidelines can provide a common set of criteria to be used by the SIG Executive Committee and Council to evaluate future proposals. Council supported the guidelines, which will become effective immediately.

Two SIGs requested name changes to better reflect their current missions and goals. The SIG Executive Committee had

reviewed the requests and supported the requested changes.

**Motion:** To approve the name change from Education and the World Wide Web to Online Teaching and Learning. Approved unanimously.

**Motion:** To approve the name change from Invitational Education to Invitational Learning. Approved unanimously.

Council discussed the recommendation from the SIG Executive Committee to incorporate SIG elections as part of the AERA general election. An integrated election would enable a more uniform timeline for election and maximize SIG members' participation. To facilitate the transition, SIG participation in the general election will be optional in 2009 and mandatory in 2010.

**Motion:** To incorporate SIG election into the AERA general election as proposed. Approved, 13; Opposed, 1.

### **11. Update on World Education Research Association Planning**

Executive Director Levine briefed Council on the effort made in moving forward with the organization of a world educational research association (WERA). She indicated that she was reporting on both her own and Eva Baker's behalf—Baker serving as AERA's other representative working toward the establishment of WERA. Levine noted that the number of participating groups had increased from 18 to 28 and that the effort had been very collaborative and productive in terms of outreach. She reported that the representatives from these associations were at the stage of refining the preamble or mission statement and the constitution. In addition, the constituent groups had been working on an initial program plan for a WERA, finances and resource needs, communications, use of technological advances, and the development of a timeline for implementation. She indicated that, although AERA initiated the idea of this effort and is facilitating the work of the international group, the Association has acted to make clear that AERA does not intend to lead or in any way dominate WERA. She noted that it was important that AERA members see the advantages for individual researchers of having a worldwide research association and that a communications working group was in part addressing how to provide information for and engender the interest of members of the constituent research associations. Council discussed how

AERA can use this relationship to facilitate opportunities for AERA members. Levine provided a brief overview of financing for WERA and described the progressive nature of membership dues options. Council member William Tierney recommended that the new association look into funding sources in addition to AERA and the other associations, such as the World Bank, UNESCO, and the Ford Foundation. Levine concluded her report by noting that the group had explored various names for an international association but that World Education Research Association (WERA) would likely become the official name. She expressed her enthusiasm for the work of this group and relayed her hope that Council and the membership of AERA would share the excitement as well.

### **12. Update on IES—Leadership Transition, Schedule for Reauthorization**

Director of Government Relations Gerald Sroufe provided Council with an update on the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). He indicated that, although the initial authorization was for a 5-year period and IES was authorized in 2002, it would likely be 2009 before the institute is reauthorized. He indicated that strategic steps—including a series of workshops directed to IES reauthorization—were in the planning stages with this timing in mind. Sroufe noted that informal communications were also under way with key individuals connected with the present and future IES to identify potential problems and produce recommendations. Sroufe explained that there would be some collaboration with other organizations. McDonnell recommended that AERA work with the Association's Organization of Institutional Affiliates (OIA) and others so that AERA will be well positioned to add its voice and views on important issues of research and science policy that would be informative and relevant in the process of considering the IES reauthorization.

### **13. Revised Definition of Scientifically Based Research**

President McDonnell briefed Council on Senate staff interested in AERA's input and advice on deriving a more flexible and sound definition of *scientifically based research* (SBR) to be considered for the introduction of pending education legislation.

Levine and Sroufe indicated that the Government Relations Committee was supportive of this task and encouraged staff to hold a meeting of scholars with strong track records in undertaking and guiding scientific research. Sroufe noted that the Government Relations Committee, along with President McDonnell, had suggested participants and that a very productive meeting was held on June 20, 2008. McDonnell indicated that a definition could be advanced without Council approval as the substantive product of research experts, although she emphasized that it would be helpful if Council reviewed and approved of the definition.

Council discussed the draft SBR definition and was very supportive of the task and the draft definition. Council members thought that the emphasis on randomized control trials should be broadened to include experiments using random assignment more generally. Council also recommended the addition of an introduction to add context to the definition. The definition was amended to read as follows:

- I. The term “principles of scientific research” means the use of rigorous, systematic, and objective methodologies to obtain reliable and valid knowledge. Specifically, such research requires:
  - (A) development of a logical, evidenced-based chain of reasoning;
  - (B) methods appropriate to the questions posed;
  - (C) observational or experimental designs and instruments that provide reliable and generalizable findings;
  - (D) data and analysis adequate to support findings;
  - (E) explication of procedures and results clearly and in detail, including specification of the population to which the findings can be generalized;
  - (F) adherence to professional norms of peer review;
  - (G) dissemination of findings to contribute to scientific knowledge; and
  - (H) access to data for reanalysis, replication, and the opportunity to build on findings.
- II. The examination of causal questions requires experimental designs using random assignment or quasi-experimental or other designs that substantially reduce plausible competing explanations for the obtained results. These include, but are not limited to, longitudinal designs, case control methods, statistical matching, or time series analyses. This standard

applies especially to studies evaluating the impacts of policies and programs on educational outcomes.

- III. The term “scientifically based research” includes basic research, applied research, and evaluation research in which the rationale, design, and interpretation are developed in accordance with the scientific principles laid out above. The term applies to all mechanisms of federal research support, whether field-initiated or directed.

**Motion:** To support the proposed revised definition of SBR as amended and to add an introduction to contextualize the definition. Approved, 12; Abstained, 1.

#### 14. Requests From the Publications Committee

Executive Director Levine reported on the need for additional budget allocation for the Social and Institutional Analysis section of the *American Educational Research Journal (AERJ-SIA)* so that additional pages can be published to accommodate what appears to be an increased submission rate to SIA. Levine reminded those present that, in January, Council had approved the allocation of funds to publish additional pages for the remainder of the current editors’ issues (March 2008 through June 2009) because of a backlog of accepted manuscripts. She noted that the backlog had resulted from an increase in manuscript submissions as well as from an increased acceptance rate and a higher maximum for manuscript length used by the current editors.

This second request was now being advanced by the Publications Committee to provide the incoming editors with an increase in the number of pages permitted from 80 to 128 per issue (in comparison with 160 pages per issue for the Teaching, Learning, and Human Development section [TLHD] of *AERJ*) for the remainder of 2009 because of the increased number of submissions. Levine indicated that the Publications Committee sought this additional allocation for 2009 only as the Committee proceeded with an examination of both the SIA and TLHD sections of *AERJ*. She noted that the Publications Committee anticipated reporting on *AERJ* to Council in sufficient time to make long-term decisions for that journal starting with 2010. Council was concerned about

the recurring need for such special provisions, but it understood the challenges and looked forward to recommendations from the Publications Committee.

**Motion:** To approve an additional allocation of 48 pages each for the September and December 2009 issues of *AERJ-SIA* and to authorize \$8,640 to cover these page costs in FY2009. Approved unanimously.

An additional request from the Publications Committee related to a recommendation to expand the publications policy for AERA journal editors’ rejection of manuscripts. The policy at that time allowed editors to reject manuscripts outside the scope of their journals. Because of the large number of manuscript submissions and the increasing demand for high-quality reviewers, the editors expressed the need to reduce the workload of the reviewer pool by eliminating full review of manuscripts of very low quality and, instead, rejecting such manuscripts through internal review by a journal’s editorial team.

Levine reported that the Publications Committee is mindful of the importance of high-quality reviewers in upholding the editorial quality of AERA’s journals and mindful as well of the importance of authors’ receiving the benefit of peer review. The Publications Committee recommended the expansion of the current policy to include desk rejects of very low-quality manuscripts, assuming that the determination is made by at least two editors or members of the editorial team and that relevant feedback is provided to authors along with the decision. Council discussed this recommendation and was supportive of the change and the way the expanded policy was being crafted.

**Motion:** To approve the revised policy for desk rejections of manuscripts by editors of AERA journals. Approved unanimously.

#### 15. Request From the Communications and Outreach Committee for Annual Meeting Guest Passes

The Communications and Outreach Committee submitted a request that the Guest Day Pass program, which was successfully implemented at the 2007 and 2008 Annual Meetings, be continued for an additional 3 years.

**Motion:** To approve the request of the Communications and Outreach Committee

for a Guest Day-Pass Program for an additional 3 years. Approved unanimously.

Council discussed the possible uses of a guest pass, such as for invited speakers who are not in the education research field. President McDonnell explained that guest passes were not to be confused with day passes or waiver of registration and should not be used as such. Council agreed that, as situations arise and special circumstances occur, the President and Executive Director will continue to devise solutions.

## 16. Discussion on Award Nominations

President McDonnell led Council in a discussion of strategies to better publicize AERA awards to generate more nominations. Deputy Executive Director Stevenson reported that, except for the nominations for the Outstanding Book Award, nominations received for awards have been low in recent years. Executive Director Levine commented that the reason for the low number of nominations may be the assumption that there are many nominations and that, therefore, any given nominee would have little chance of winning the award. She indicated that this phenomenon is experienced by many scholarly and research associations. She urged Council to come up with ways to create a culture of encouraging nominations and indicated that moving the process online could potentially simplify it. President McDonnell suggested putting the information in *Education Week* and other venues to increase visibility of the call for award nominations. Council discussed the following strategies to promote the call: listing the awards on the AERA website, sending e-mail reminders about the nomination process to members, encouraging deans of graduate schools of education to submit nominations, including the call for nominations in division and SIG newsletters, and introducing an online submission option on the AERA website.

## 17. Joint Committee of Annual Meeting Policies and Procedures and Research Advisory Report on Annual Meeting

Council member Arnetha Ball joined the discussion by conference call. Executive Director Levine reported that the Joint Annual Meeting Policies and Procedures

and Research Advisory Committee (Joint AMPP-RAC) had worked effectively and tirelessly on the report and had responded to comments from Council members as well as to those submitted during the open comment period. She and President McDonnell indicated that they were very impressed by the work and level of engagement of the Joint Committee. Council unanimously signaled its appreciation to the Joint Committee for a high-quality job and substantial effort. On the recommendation of the Executive Board, Levine asked that Council review and approve each section of the report, one at a time. She noted that some topics, such as the paper repository and the possibility of more plenaries or mini-plenaries, were being deferred until the January meeting of Council.

*Section 1—Session Formats.* Key recommendations included asking submitters of paper proposals to indicate whether they seek to participate in a paper, poster, or roundtable session; eliminating the “New Member Poster Session” format; making poster sessions more visible and high profile; changing the session name “Paper Discussion” to “Roundtable,” with a designated chair and three to five presenters at each table; and requiring that the “Paper Session” format have one or more chairs but making discussants optional. Key recommendations for new session formats included “Working Group Roundtable” and “Structured Poster Session” The “Interactive Symposium” format will be incorporated into the “Symposium” format and the latter name will be used; “Demonstration” and “Performance” will be merged in a single session format; and submissions for off-site visits will be encouraged.

Council discussed ways of holding people accountable for the quality of poster sessions and the logistics of roundtable sessions.

*Motion:* To approve the section on Session Formats. Approved, 14.

*Section 2—Requirements for Submission.* The recommendations included specifications regarding the completeness of submissions for papers and sessions. Council discussed the wording of several recommended items and emphasized the need for clarity. Levine indicated that the Joint Committee would incorporate the suggestions and clarifications in a revised call for submissions and in the Annual Meeting Procedures Handbook. Council discussed

the Institutional Review Board (IRB)-related requirement, including the legal implications of having an IRB check-off and whether asking the question and having the check-off would reduce the Association’s liability. Council agreed that a “Not Applicable” option should be added to the IRB check-off.

*Motion:* Add to the Call for Proposals a statement where submitters attest to the fact that they have received IRB approval or indicate “Not Applicable.” Approved, 10; Opposed, 2; Abstained, 1.

*Motion:* To accept Section 2 as amended. Approved unanimously.

*Section 3—Issues With Respect to Participation.* Recommendations included asking presenters to be attentive to time allocation for presenting their work; requiring that chairs and discussants have substantive background and expertise appropriate to the substance of the session; making chairs responsible for implementing and providing feedback on their sessions; and clarifying the role of discussants. Council discussed scenarios where a chair would need to step in as discussant. It was also clarified that the selection of chair and discussant would be based on expertise and that graduate students therefore would not be excluded.

*Motion:* To approve Section 3 as amended. Approved unanimously.

*Section 4—Peer-Review Process.* Recommendations in this section included the use of review panels and the review procedures. Council discussed the reasoning behind the recommendation that scores submitted by graduate student reviewers not be counted. Levine and McDonnell pointed out that the primary rationale for graduate student participation in the review process is to provide the opportunity for graduate students to gain experience and be mentored. Council generally agreed on the value of graduate student participation as part of professionalization and discussed how graduate students’ reviews can contribute to the decision-making process but agreed that the scores submitted by students should not be included in the count. Council discussed the use of review panels, and some members expressed concerns about potential difficulty in acquiring qualified and diverse panel members. Levine indicated that a number of divisions were interested in piloting the review panel model and will brief Council on their experience in January 2009. Council was supportive of these pilots and looked forward to getting

feedback from them before adopting the policy of using review panels. Levine indicated that the Joint Committee would also review and compare the outcomes of these pilot programs and offer additional recommendations. Council discussed the importance of emphasizing the benefit and value of serving on a review panel and ways of acknowledging the reviewers' contributions. Council also discussed how review panels can be inclusive to ensure maximal participation by qualified reviewers.

**Motion:** To table Section 4 until January 2009. Approved unanimously.

## **Saturday, July 12, 2008 (Meeting Day 2)**

*Section 5—Other Recommendations and Issues for Decision Making.* The Joint Committee report included additional recommendations on reducing the total number of paper/symposium sessions to 1,000 while increasing the use of poster and roundtable sessions; a mechanism to gather feedback from session chairs; and a process for the Joint Committee to assess the Annual Meeting in the 3rd year of implementing the changes. President McDonnell led the discussion on reducing the number of paper/symposium sessions and thus the number of concurrent sessions. She indicated that she had received comments from Meeting attendees who found the Meeting too large and difficult to navigate, in terms of both the layout of the sessions and the size of the space needed for so many sessions. In general, Council acknowledged that it was a good idea to reduce the number of paper sessions but was apprehensive about making a drastic reduction effective immediately. The group discussed the possibility of implementing the change gradually by reducing the sessions in 2009 and 2010 to 1,250 and then further reducing the sessions in 2011 to 1,000. The phased implementation would allow members time to become socialized to the changes and would provide AERA time to find creative ways to maximize the increased use of poster sessions. Most Council members agreed that a phased approach seemed like a good idea. There was concern voiced over the appearance of reduced opportunity to participate, although the plan called for an increase in poster sessions and in roundtable participants, so that the total number of participants in the meeting would not necessarily be reduced. Council discussed the value of making poster sessions

more attractive and better structured so that they will no longer be seen as second-class opportunities and a wide range of scholars will be attracted to them. McDonnell stressed that reducing the number of sessions would be an important way to improve the program and increase the quality of the Annual Meeting. She suggested having conversations with program chairs to highlight poster sessions and explore ways of featuring cross-divisional themes. She also indicated that she and Michael Feuer, AERA General Program Chair, will explore the possible use of a working group of volunteers who would be invited to identify a group of sessions and meet before and after the meeting to engender "intellectual take-away." She stressed the importance of making explicit to members the importance of using roundtable and poster sessions in creative ways to feature their work.

**Motion:** To approve the reduction of sessions to 1,250 in 2009 and 2010. Approved, 3; Opposed, 5; Abstained, 6.

**Motion:** To approve Section 5 except for the recommendation related to reducing the number of paper/symposium sessions to 1,000. Approved unanimously.

Council recognized that the Joint AMPP-RAC Committee might wish to revisit the topics of total number of sessions, the allocation model, and the strength of the rationale for reducing the total number of sessions. Council also turned to suggestions for how to enhance the navigation of the current online program to make searches for sessions easier. Council discussed the possibility of creating geographic coherence, whereby similar poster and roundtable sessions could be placed in the same general area to yield higher attendance. The possibility of scheduling division sessions in the same way to create geographic and temporal cohesion was discussed. A suggestion was made to allow each division to schedule its own sessions, but Levine asked the Council to keep in mind the implications of enabling divisions to run "mini-meetings" without support and coordination. She also pointed out that allowing divisions to slot their own sessions would preclude AERA from ensuring that participants are not scheduled for more than one unit at the same time or that major speakers invited by different units are not competing for audiences.

## **18. Session Allocation for the 2009 Annual Meeting in San Diego**

President McDonnell briefed Council on the number of sessions available for divisions and SIGs in recent years. Based on space availability, she indicated that a total of 1,440 sessions can be made available for allocation for the 2009 Annual Meeting in San Diego. However, she reported on a discussion by the 2009 Program Committee in June in which concern was expressed regarding the overall quality of sessions. In general, members of the Program Committee tended to favor the notion that less is more in terms of the number of sessions and concurrent sessions. In addition, the Joint AMPP-RAC Committee also concurred on the importance of improving the quality of sessions and of reducing the number of concurrent sessions and the overall number of paper/symposium sessions. As a result, the recommended number of sessions for 2009 was 1,250 with additional poster session allocation to ensure that the 2008 participation rate would be maintained.

**Motion:** To approve 2009 session allocation for San Diego at 1,250 sessions. Approved, 5; Opposed, 8; Abstained, 2.

Because the recommended motion did not pass, the session allocation for San Diego will be 1,440.

## **19. Continued Discussion of the Proposal From the Social Justice Action Committee on Initiative for Research on Indigenous Education**

Council reviewed a revised statement prepared by Carol Lee and Felice Levine and approved by Kris Gutierrez and Brian Brayboy. Council was generally supportive of this revised plan to hold a research conference to examine the knowledge base on Indigenous populations in education, synthesize what is known, identify issues of significance where research is absent or needed, consider infrastructural issues and database needs, and recommend important directions for future research. Council discussed how the initiative will be operationalized and what steps can be taken to ensure the quality of the work. There was also discussion of the budget for this conference and some concerns that the proposed budget was larger than needed for this more focused initiative. Levine indicated that, with rising travel costs, the final budget would depend on the size

and scope of this research conference and on whether a further planning meeting was necessary. Levine noted that perhaps the final budget should be approved by the Executive Board in October after Gutierrez and Brayboy have more of an opportunity to consider the revised project plan. The estimated timeline for the research conference was spring of 2009, possibly in May or June, with a report to undergo review and, if accepted for AERA publication, to be released in time for a symposium planned for 2010. As the main organizers, Brayboy and Gutierrez were encouraged to submit a revised budget and tasks and timetable to the Executive Board. George Wimberly, Director of AERA's Social Justice Program, and President-Elect Carol Lee also expressed interest in being involved.

**Motion:** To approve the SJAC initiative as revised. Approved unanimously.

## 20. Council Retreat Discussion

President McDonnell introduced the retreat discussion as an opportunity to consider longer term issues and initiatives to advance the goals of AERA. McDonnell indicated that the work of the staff to provide background materials for the retreat was very much appreciated. She acknowledged in particular the background paper on professional development prepared by George Wimberly, AERA Director of Social Justice and Professional Development. McDonnell asked Executive Director Levine to make some initial remarks to open the retreat discussion.

Levine noted the importance of the three objectives that constitute the Association's mission—to advance knowledge about education, encourage scholarly inquiry related to education, and promote the use of research to improve education and serve the public good. She briefly overviewed how the Association has evolved over the past several years to undertake initiatives and make strategic choices aligned with these objectives and emphasized that she welcomed the retreat as an opportunity to make further gains. She

gave a few examples of how similar sessions in prior Council meetings have shaped the directions and work of the Association.

Council discussion initially focused on possible ways to strengthen the Annual Meeting in addition to the recommendations put forth by the Joint AMPP-RAC Committee. Strategies discussed include ways to make proposal acceptance rates more transparent and uniform; ways to recognize excellence (such as recognizing best papers presented at the Annual Meeting and other grassroots piloting of creative ideas); ways to encourage units to only accept high-quality papers and feature high-quality sessions; a different session allocation formula which would be based on the number of submissions and acceptance rate of the previous year; the provision of incentives for greater collaboration across units; and ways to encourage submissions of work that is closer to completion. Council thought that the Joint AMPP-RAC Committee should be asked to consider these issues as well as those remaining on their agenda.

Council also discussed innovative ways for the Association to provide professional development opportunities beyond the Annual Meeting. Strategies discussed include the use of competitive small grants program for research conferences; the use of webinars, podcasts and other technological innovations to feature professional development opportunities throughout the year; collaboration with state and regional associations; expanded use of the AERA website to feature and disseminate education research information; training seminars and workshops to be held on individual campuses, through video conferencing or as on-line courses; and structured discussions about the teaching of education research, including potentially through articles or columns in AERA journals. Council requested that the Professional Development and Training Committee collaborate with the Technology Committee to explore options and provide recommendations for Council's consideration.

In light of the visibility and frequent use of the AERA website, Council discussed ways to make the website more lively and asked that the Technology and Communications and Outreach Committees explore possibilities. Some illustrative options include the selection of a theme which would be used in activities relating to mentoring and featured broadly in the form of point-counter-point in *Educational Researcher*, the AERA website, and the Annual Meeting.

Additional topics that were of concern include the changing landscape in higher education (such as changing age of graduate students, increasing number of adjunct faculty, and decreasing number of tenured faculty); quality of graduate education; the need for AERA to collect data so that the Association can anticipate the needs of education research as a field and plan strategically; ways to feature cutting-edge basic research and linking research to practical problems; and ways to ensure that the new generation of education researchers have broad vision. Council discussed the importance of cross-divisional and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Council discussed a number of initiatives and priority goals that are under way. Council was supportive of the Association's commitment to mentoring early scholars with an emphasis on providing research opportunities for scholars of color; the establishment of a world federation of education research associations; strengthening ties with research societies outside of education research whose members conduct education-related research; ensuring more rigorous evaluation of AERA projects and activities; and improving the quality of AERA's journals and its publication program.

## 21. Executive Session

Executive Director Levine and the Council met in executive session.

## 22. Adjournment

Council adjourned at 2:00 p.m.