Sigma Tau Delta Ad Hoc Convention Advisory Board
Minutes of March 21, 2015

Present: Gloria J. Hochstein (chair), Sid Watson, Carrie Fitzpatrick, William C. Johnson, Sarah Dangelantonio

Purposes of Convention Advisory Board (CAB)

- To oversee convention preparations and operations.
- To communicate to Convention Chairs (CCs) Central Office (CO) needs and limitations.
- To remind CCs of <u>firm</u> deadlines for getting materials to the CO.
- To remind CCs of other established and ongoing needs, requirements, limitations, and policies for conventions.
- To make recommendations to CCs and to the Convention Committee.

Website Content, Program, and Program Booklet

- **By December 1**, CCs for the convention that follows the upcoming convention should submit to the CO their logo, common reader, and theme description for inclusion in the upcoming convention's program booklet. (Example: The logo, common reader, and theme description for the 2017 Convention is due by December 1, 2015.)
- CCs should submit website content to the CO, and update content for program, in a timely manner. For example, starting in the **summer before the convention**, all sections of the program booklet outside of the session presentations and roundtables and indices should be revised and updated **no later than November 1**.
- **From the Fall Board Meeting until the convention**, CCs must set aside at least two hours/week to work with the CO **during regular business hours Monday through Friday.** (CO staff should not be expected or asked to work after hours or on weekends and holidays.)
- The convention program and program booklet should follow the established template used by the CO for basic content, length of sessions, table of contents, and organization of materials.
- In order to reduce the work of the CO when the program is being readied for printing, it is recommended that the CC set up a small group of Convention Committee members to be an editing group to proofread parts of the program, including proofreading the sessions and indices. The CC should assign sections of the program to be proofread by faculty so no one person has to proofread all, but all parts have several proofreaders. Editors need to look at sessions to make sure that italics and quotation marks are used correctly for longer works and shorter works, respectively.

Convention Hotel

- Firm: The CO (Deb Seyler) handles ALL arrangements and contacts with convention hotels, including meeting room arrangements, housing arrangements, audiovisual requests, and all hotel catering.
- The CO (Deb Seyler) will provide CCs with the number and size of available meeting rooms at the convention hotel.
- Audiovisual requests from presenters must come in with the submissions. (a) A projector and screen will be set up in **one room on one day of the convention**. It is at the discretion of the CC to determine who gets a projector. (b) Other presenters are welcome to bring their own projectors and set up in their assigned session room; screens are the presenters' responsibility.

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Speakers

- It is strongly recommended that only two major speakers be contracted to present at convention.
- It is strongly recommended that major speakers have a connection to the geographical area surrounding the site of the convention. (The connection might be that the speakers reside in that area and/or that the speakers use the regional geography, culture, etc. in their writing.)
- Speaker budget must cover all costs for speakers and workshop leaders, including speaking fees, hotel costs, meals, transportation, and any receptions.
- Sarah Dangelantonio will write up additional information to be added to these notes at a later date on speaker contracts and contract negotiations.
- **During the fall preceding the convention**, the CCs must find a local bookstore to handle sales of books by speakers and workshop leaders.
- The Student Leadership Committee usually decides which student leaders will be introducing and accompanying speakers and other guests. Because this information is included in the program booklet, decisions need to be made by December 1. Speaker introductions given by student leaders should be written, edited, and approved by the CC or someone appointed by the CC by January 31.

Roundtables

- Roundtable spaces must be reserved for at least two Service roundtables, one to two NEHS/English Ed. roundtables, and two SKD roundtables, which may or may not include a presentation by Randy Cross.
- A single chapter may submit a maximum of two roundtables.
- The CC is encouraged to delegate roundtable evaluations and selections.

Evaluation of Submissions

- Rubrics for evaluation of submissions should be revised **during the summer before the convention**.
- The CCs need to work with the CO (Elfi Gabriel) to develop a rubric for roundtables that differs from those for creative or critical writing. Roundtable submissions need to include details for how the roundtables will involve the audience in the discussion, and need to include adequate details to show that roundtables are not composed of participants simply reading papers. Judging needs to give special attention to roundtables from more than one chapter.
- Before submission judging is completed, the CO (Elfi Gabriel) will assist CCs to determine the number of submissions to be accepted based on available meeting rooms and the number of sessions.
- There is a very limited time for organizing the accepted works into sessions for the program. To speed up the process and to reduce the strain on the CC, and to give experience to potential future CCs, CCs should delegate the grouping of papers to other faculty. For example, the CC could ask someone else to group the American literature papers into sessions and give a title to each session. Another faculty member could organize the creative nonfiction works into sessions with common theme or keywords. Much of the session organizing could be done fairly quickly this way.
- When grouping works into sessions, CCs need to consider the topic/content/keyword of each work and also consider the length of each work in order to know how many works can be grouped into a single session. The average is 4 works/session, but genre and length might affect that, so some sessions might have 3 works and others might have 5 (and in the case of poetry, occasionally 6) works per session.

Budget/Advertising

- Budget bottom line is firm, so CCs may reallocate funds within the budget, but CCs may not exceed the bottom line of the budget.
- CCs should avoid spending Society money (which comes from student membership fees) for convention activities with a limited audience. For example, rather than have a catered gathering so a few faculty can meet with a speaker, CCs are encouraged instead to have an informal gathering with light snacks and beverages purchased at a local store. CCs could have volunteer drivers obtain those refreshments for under $150 and could easily fit that amount into the speaker budget.
- CCs and the CO should make sure that the sponsorship agreement form for local businesses is ready **by the fall Board meeting** so the Student Representatives (SRs) can take those with them when they scout out potential advertisers. SRs should be able to arrange for payment on the spot.

Delegation

- CCs should break up convention preparation and should delegate as much as possible to reduce the amount of work for the CCs. CCs should make use of the experience of previous CCs, but also give convention preparation experience to potential future CCs.
- The CC is encouraged to delegate to another faculty member the task of setting up the **Sponsor workshops** for the new Sponsors and continuing Sponsors. Workshop details are due December 1.
- The CC could delegate to another faculty member the task of organizing the **career development workshops.** Workshop details are due December 1.
- The Student Leadership Committee is responsible for planning, organizing, and running the **student leadership workshops, the Abcedarian meeting, and the training sessions for incoming student leaders** following the elections at the caucuses. The Student Advisors (SAs) are responsible for working with the CO to produce any literature needed for the training sessions and for arranging food and beverages for the training sessions. (NOT catered by hotel. Usually pizza or sandwiches delivered, and soda purchased at local store.)
- The CC is NOT responsible for organizing the **Regents and Sponsors Luncheon** or the **President's Reception**. Those arrangements are handled by the CO.
- The CC should involve the Alumni Representative in planning the informal **Alumni networking session**, and in planning the **Alumni meeting**.
- During registration at convention, a list should be compiled of **attendees who have vehicles** at the convention, along with their cell phone numbers, in order to have a group of volunteers who could run errands during the convention.
- It is recommended that during registration at convention, a list be compiled of **alumni and faculty members (with cell phone numbers) who are willing to assist during the convention**. Assistance might be picking up refreshments for an informal gathering, filling in as last minute moderators for moderators who have cancelled or not shown up, fulfilling a speaker request, setting up the Presidential Suite for an informal gathering, and other last minute duties.