

SIGMAA-QL Business Meeting

Joint Math Meetings, San Antonio, TX

January 10, 2015 (Saturday 6:00pm-6:30pm, Room 213A, Convention Center)

Officers present: Andy Miller, Past Chair (retiring); Victor Piercey, Web Master, Gary Franchy, Chair (incoming) and Chair-Elect (retiring), Gizem Karaali, Secretary/Treasurer (minutes recorded by Karaali, Secretary/Treasurer).

We waited a bit to begin our business meeting, even though most of us were present at 6:00pm.

Our past chair Andy (in place of our current chair Aaron who could not be at the JMM this year) opened the meeting at 6:10. Aaron had circulated an informal agenda via email (dated 12/29/14) before:

1. Ways to spend money (more officially a new idea, that of a QL Ambassador, see below).
2. Where to find officers (context: we had only one nominee for Chair Elect this year and he was mid-term in another SIGMAA QL executive officer position. So we have not run our election during our regularly scheduled time).
3. How to govern the SIGMAA in 2015 (as a result of the context given in item 2 above; this we decided the officers would have to hash out a bit more before bringing to the membership).
4. Charter update (not on Aaron's 12/29 email but this came up during officers' correspondence).

These general themes made up the main conversation for the meeting.

More specifically:

We first noted that there was not a quorum (which eventually got resolved), but that also the minutes from the last meeting had not been officially circulated among the membership. The secretary (Gizem) will send these out together with the 2015 meeting minutes and we will vote on both next year.

Gizem suggested that we might want to drop the "treasurer" assignment from the executive committee, as now the SIGMAAs will no longer have independent budgets. This connected to the charter conversation. Andy explained to the group that if we want to change officer titles, we need to update our charter. And if we want to update our charter, we should adopt the new model charter that is being developed for all SIGMAAs. We will probably wait to get the model charter and study it and see what we can adopt and what we might wish to change. (Members can expect to hear more about this in 2015.)

Eric posed the question of membership. Do we have a falling number? Are we concerned? Andy and Gizem replied that the numbers are rather stable, but it would be wonderful if we could engage more of our membership. Eric added that probably increasing numbers would not hurt either.

Caren suggested that a good way of bringing in new members and possibly reactivating older ones could be to run an MAA PREP (Professional Enhancement Program – see <http://www.maa.org/programs/faculty-and-departments/prep-workshops>) workshop over a summer (an idea we have been thinking about in these meetings, see meeting minutes from JMM 2013 and JMM 2014). Eric emphatically agreed, saying that he had run several for BIOSIGMAA and that they had been helpful.

Caren also suggested that minicourses could help.

Victor pointed out that now the state of Michigan has QR in its official curricular language and so this might be the same in many other states. This might be a good time to invite new people in if we offer them ways to handle these new curricular requirements.

Greg pointed out that AMATYC (American Mathematical Association of Two-Year College – see <http://www.amatyc.org>) does not have a structure parallel to the SIGMAA-QL and perhaps we could coordinate and cooperate.

Then Greg brought up a topic of discussion on what we actually do. What does SIGMAA-QL do? What is our mission? What do our members gain from being a member? What can we do better?

Andy first summarized our mission as “to promote QR education and scholarship” and we then focused on how we can improve our efficiency and effectiveness. We definitely do well with organizing CPSs (contributed paper sessions) where attendance is high and we get a diverse selection of presentations. But how can we get more members to engage with the SIGMAA more regularly and at a deeper level? This led to two discussion points:

1. Shall we create (non-elected) committees so that we can open up the work of the SIGMAA to more people? Involve more people actively at the leadership level? (the officers had been talking about this before but Eric was the one who put it forward at the meeting.)
 - a. It seemed like a great idea! Why don't we for instance create such a committee for collaboration with two-year colleges? We can have Gary be on that committee.
2. Shall we create a QL Ambassador program? (this was Aaron's proposal, and Andy presented it to the rest of the group at the meeting.)

More specifically, the QL Ambassador would be a perk of membership, Aaron suggested a \$500/year budget, possibly split among two members. This would be used for a SIGMAA QL member to attend a non-math conference or a SIGMAA QL member to sponsor the attendance of a non-mathematician at a math conference.

Andy offered a brief overview of this idea. Then we had a discussion:

Kira said she liked the idea a lot, then asked if we had the funds, and it did seem that this would be financially feasible.

Eric pointed out that someone could be brought to the JMM with this funding.

Then we had a show of hands and the group seemed to like the idea. Andy made it clear that this was not a vote to approve this idea, just a show of interest and tentative support. There should be a formal proposal that the membership should vote on.

Caren raised a tricky question: "How do we define a 'non-mathematician'?" Do statisticians and computer scientists count?

Eric suggested that we do not have to define. And Victor and Gizem suggested that not defining is a choice that makes a particular type of point.

Kira endorsed the idea of opening up / broadening as much as possible.

Andy then brought us to the discussion of what we should do to bring in new members and what specific activities to plan for the upcoming meetings, and for MathFEST 2015 in particular. He pointed out that a CPS (contributed paper session) would reach more people actively than a panel, but that we do not have the time to submit a CPS proposal. Caren suggested that we could invite a politician to talk since the meeting is to be in DC. Eric mentioned that his congressional representative is the chair of the higher education committee but he was not clear on whether that would be a good choice to invite. We were all thoughtful for a second about whether politicians know and appreciate enough of QL/QR. Kira pointed out that we could invite someone from the Kettering Foundation, a foundation that aims to support an engaged healthy democracy.

Then Andy did a superb job of putting together all of these ideas and offered possible themes for possible future sessions:

- QL and GE
- QL beyond the four-year college
- QL in K-12
- QL in K-16

As Kira observed, students do read Hamlet at several stages of their K-16 education and it is natural to expect that QL/QR would / could come up in several stages too.

Then the reception (which was amazing, and included a fabulous guacamole, the most flavorful chili con queso, and the tastiest chicken and red pepper quesadillas, all together simply delicious!!! you just should have all been there!!!) continued until people all eventually trickled out.

Attending (members):

1. Victor Piercey (Ferris State University)
2. Andy Miller (Belmont University)
3. Gizem Karaali (Pomona College)
4. Stuart Boersma (Central Washington University)
5. Gary Franchy (Southwestern Michigan College)
6. Kira Hamman (Penn State Mont Alto)
7. Eric Marland (Appalachian State University)
8. May Mei (Denison University)
9. Caren Diefenderfer (Hollins University)
10. Greg Foley (Ohio University)

Attending (non-members):

11. Amy Boersma (non-member)