

Minutes

**MAA Section Officers Meeting
Thursday, July 31, 2008
2:30 – 5:00 p.m.
Ballroom B, Monona Terrace
Madison, Wisconsin**

1. Welcome and Preliminary Business:

- Committee on Sections Chair, Nancy Hagelgans, welcomed attendees, passed out an attendance roster, and asked section officers and guests to introduce themselves.
- MAA President, Joe Gallian, greeted the attendees and commented on some of his and the MAA's recent activities. He reported that (1) he had visited 26 sections during his term as MAA President, (2) Professor Judy Walker (University of Nebraska) has been appointed as the new Polya Lecturer, and (3) he encourages sections and individuals to purchase Carriage House bricks to support the Association.
- Chair Hagelgans thanked Joanne Peeples for her service as Secretary of the Committee on Sections and announced that Steve Carlson has been appointed to take over that position.
- Chair Hagelgans commented on a few procedural section items. Reimbursement guidelines/forms are available online (<http://www.maa.org/sections/expense-form.html>) ; Annual Section Reports are will be posted on MAA Online; and the MAA Staff contact for sections is Dan Conner (dconner@maa.org).

2. General Group Discussion: Chair Hagelgans solicited response from section officers to the following two questions.

- “What are the strengths of your section?” Responses/comments:
 - a. Interaction with the Association of Two Year Colleges during jointly held meetings.
 - b. Section NExT activities are going well.
 - c. Every third meeting is held early (in April or May instead of June, the usual time) to attract student attendees.
 - d. Math Jeopardy at section meetings has been successful.
 - e. Online section newsletter (2 sections).
 - f. Able to attract a large group of student attendees.
 - g. Problem solving competition for students (2 sections).
 - h. Fairly large number of student talks.
 - i. Face-off competition for students.
 - j. Session at section meeting for graduate students.
 - k. Online proceedings of talks given at section meetings.
 - l. Session for beginning faculty at section meetings.

- “What is the one biggest need of your section?” Responses/comments:
 - a. Using credit cards for meeting registration. [Some sections use outsourcing (e.g., Paypal); it is important to keep national MAA and MAA section collections separate.]
 - b. Need for a central location to keep section records. [The MAA is considering content management systems for sections and can already archive/backup section files. The MAA Archives, housed at the University of Texas, is available for submission of documents of a historical nature. Some sections maintain their historical information on a section history web page.]
 - c. Need to increase participation in the section by new faculty and research faculty. [Section Project NExT programs are helpful in attracting new faculty. The group discussed the importance of participation by research faculty in the sections. Sections might try to attract graduate students through their advisors and, in turn, attract the advisors to the sections. Section meetings could provide opportunities for beginning professors to present their research work in expository talks, understandable to general audiences including undergraduate students. It was noted that over the last decade participation of students at section meetings has increased significantly while total attendance has remained level, indicating that faculty attendance has decreased.]

3. MAA Strategic Planning: Tina Straley, MAA Executive Director.

- Executive Director Straley offered a brief overview of the MAA strategic planning process from 1999 to the present.
- The process involves “continuous strategic planning,” which reviews each designated area (e.g., professional development, governance, etc.) within the Association every five years.
- To date two phases have been completed. Each phase involved three strategic planning workgroups, each of which reported on one designated area. The recent phase involves four groups, including one that is considering strategic planning for MAA sections.

4. Focus Group Discussions: Chair Hagelgans requested that the attendees break out into five discussion groups.

- Notes of each group’s discussion were taken by a member of the Committee on Sections who served as the group’s recorder.
- Each group was asked to consider the following questions:
 - a. What are the 5 things the Association should expect from your section?
 - b. What are the 5 things your section expects from the Association?
 - c. How do you provide for leadership transition and continuity of the section’s knowledge base?

- d. How can the Association help your section make effective leadership transitions?
- e. What would you like the Strategic Planning Working Group on Sections to know or to consider?

5. Concluding General Group Discussion: Chair Hagelgans concluded the meeting with a brief question/discussion session on the following topics.

- Sections' willingness to help recruit non-MAA members to join the MAA? [Consensus answer: Yes.]
- The notion of MAA membership without journal subscriptions.
- Procedures for section book sales.
 - a. MAA books that are not available for immediate pickup at section meeting book sales can be purchased at the meeting and will be shipped to the purchaser without charge.
 - b. Answers to specific questions on book sale procedures should be directed to the MAA office.
- Questions on MAA correspondence with new section officers (possible welcoming e-mail to new officers containing useful information, etc.)

6. Adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Carlson,

Secretary, MAA Committee on Sections