

Membership Notes May 2009

Business as Usual

2009-2010 CASCA membership management duties continued to be performed in the same way as past years.

Renewal notices were sent out to the 2009 members in January 2010. There was a good response to these e-mails (as there was in previous years), witnessed by the huge flux of membership registrations in the days and weeks following the delivery of the notices. The inclusion of the registration form LINK in the renewal notices is crucial to the high rate of response, in my opinion. In fact, each time that I am in contact with someone whose registration is out of date, I suggest that they renew their membership and I include this link in the e-mail. I think it promotes people to register and do so right away.

This year I went one step further and sent renewal notices to 2008 members who had not registered in 2009. This was a very successful process. ~40 of these 2008-2009 lapsed members registered within a month. I believe we should continue with this process in years to come. Some people register very late in the calendar year so when I send them a January renewal notice, they ignore it, not realising that their membership has already expired. This could also be the case with mid-year registrants – they believe their registration lasts for one year, not for the rest of a calendar year, so they don't register when the renewal notices go out. I also worry that we lose people if they go on sabbatical or leave of other kinds. With this new process, at least we can catch them a year later, even if we miss the year in between. I could also start sending out renewal notices to people during the calendar month that they registered the year before. This would be more time consuming than sending out the one-lump January notices, but it might also be more effective?

Communication between myself and the Wilfred Laurier Press (with Cheryl Beaupre), continues to be excellent. C.B. is very helpful and professional.

Lapsing Memberships, Membership Figures

Lapsing memberships continue to be a big problem for us. Lapsing memberships seem to be linked to the conference - many of the people who sign up for membership do so mainly because this is a requirement for conference attendance. It is very important, then, that the conference is well attended each year.

The final membership number for 2006 was 652 registrants (the registration period for 2006 was 16 months, not 12 months, so the figure is relatively high – the corrected value is 489), 2007: 605, 2008: 543 and 2009: 529. These numbers compare very favourably with the 2005 total of 374. As of the 1st of May we had 461 names on our 2010 membership list. On the same date of 2009 there were 464 registrants. We seem to be on track to have the same membership numbers as last year. Not bad, considering that our 2010 conference list has only 310 names on it whereas on May 1st 2007 we had 410 conference registrants, on the same date in 2008 we had 332 conference registrants and on May 1st, 2009 we had 376 conference registrants. Despite lower conference numbers the membership numbers seem to be remaining consistent.

Membership Numbers:

2006 (16 month registration period): TOTAL: 652 members, 35010\$

12 family=\$1500
294 students=\$8820
9 post-doc=\$270
275 regular=\$22000
22 retired=\$660
32 unwaged=\$960
8 sustaining=\$800

2007: TOTAL: 605 members, 31575\$

9 family=\$1125
278 students=\$8340
241 regular=\$19280
31 post-doc=\$930
17 retired=\$510
20 unwaged=\$600
6 sustaining=\$600
+3 WLP subscription transfers (\$190)

2008: TOTAL: 543 members, \$27695

7 family=\$875
264 students=\$7920
212 regular=\$16960
21 post-doc=\$630
20 retired=\$600
17 unwaged=\$510
2 sustaining=\$200

2009: TOTAL: 529 members, \$28075

9 family=\$1125
227 students=\$6810
196 regular=\$17600
35 post-doc=\$1050
14 retired=\$420
19 unwaged=\$570
5 sustaining=\$500

2010(to May 24): TOTAL: 468 members, \$24315

3 family=\$375
208 students=\$6240
190 regular=\$15200
23 post-doc=\$690
17 retired=\$510
19 unwaged=\$570
7 sustaining=\$700
1 emerita=\$30

The 2009 figures are down. The economy? Conference related? (All 2010 conference people registered for membership in 2010, this is not usually the case. Usually, a few people register the year before, not understanding the rules, and I let these people slide, given that they registered for membership in good faith, just in the wrong year. The effect of the later-occurring CASCA10 registration process is that we have less 2009 members and should have a few more in 2010 – I estimate by approximately 9 people).

Would it be possible to offer multiple year memberships at slightly reduced rates, for example 3 years for \$225 as opposed to \$240? Is it time to raise our membership fees? They have not been raised during the time I have been doing this job (I started in August 2005). What are the journals costing CASCA? Have those prices gone up?

New in 2009-10

Two weird, not very good things happened in 2009/2010. Luckily, both have been sorted out.

U Manitoba CASCA-L list

Someone hacked into the University of Manitoba list serve system and sent out offensive e-mails to an old CASCA list. This list has now been removed from the U Manitoba list serve system. Deirdre drafted an apology e-mail which I forwarded to that list of people before it was eliminated.

Lost Salisbury Fund donations

In January we found out that all Salisbury donations made through our membership registration form since we added the donation option (in January 2008), were not actually being charged to the credit cards. The problem has now been corrected on the membership form. We lost \$2250 in donations over ~two years. Vincent of Leverus initially agreed to credit CASCA for these funds. Unfortunately, when Deirdre and I approached him for a credit later on, he ignored our appeals. In April, we decided to approach our members ourselves to ask them if they would be willing to resubmit their donation. 53 people were contacted regarding re-donation. As of May 25th 2010, 21 people had responded, agreeing to repay the donation. 15 of these people have followed up. \$850 has been recollected.

Paypal/Leverus

This error on the part of Leverus, coupled with other errors they have made in the past, and their reticence to reimburse CASCA for the lost Salisbury funds, has made us seriously consider whether or not we should continue a business relationship with this company. Michel and I have been discussing other options. One of these is Paypal. We have been using Paypal for the Salisbury redonations and for the CASCA10 banquet ticket payments. This is a trial run. I find Paypal very useful in some ways, it is easy to use for simple transactions, for example, but it is troublesome in other ways. It isn't a system that would be compatible with my regular membership and conference registration duties. My way of managing my lists could be changed, however, but I believe it would take me more time to do my work with Paypal, therefore this would be more expensive for CASCA. More importantly, many people seem to dislike using Paypal for various reasons, and either don't use it (we lose people) or seek alternative payment options – for example cheque payment which is a time-consuming step backward, or fudged payments through our existing on-line payment forms. I believe that most, if not all, of the 6 people who agreed to repay their Salisbury donation, but who haven't followed through, have not paid because of Paypal. I have had similar problems with non-

payment of paypal invoices for the CASCA10 banquet. When people tell me that they don't want to use Paypal, they cite problems of SPAM, not wanting to open yet another account, or that their credit card doesn't seem to work in the system. To me, the most problematic issues with Paypal are that people don't seem to respond as well to invoicing as they do to clicking on a link, and that one has to sign up in order to make a payment.

Personally, I would prefer to have a registration/payment system similar to that which we have had with Leverus, but to simply change to a company that is better managed. Another solution to our problem could be to have someone (myself? Michel?) verify that on-line registration sheets are correct and up-to-date on critical dates and times.

We could keep the Paypal system open because it appears to be convenient under some circumstances, but only use it for situations like those of the banquet tickets or Salisbury thing. As a back-up, I would like to create a third payment form (with Leverus or whoever), similar to that of membership and conference registration, but this form would have click-off denominations of \$5/\$10/\$25/\$50/\$100 with a comment field that people can use to state for what their payment is being made. This would be useful for event ticket payments and things like Salisbury donations. This would be much more convenient than cheque payments and would allow the flexibility of making payments without registering in full. Cost?

Conference Registration and Payment Management

As CRPM I manage the conference registration list and forward it to the LOC on a regular basis. I think this system functions smoothly. The LOC doesn't have to fumble around with big unwieldy lists with which they have little familiarity, and I spend less time answering LOC questions. Because both the LOC and the CRPM have access to updated/corrected lists everyone can better answer registrants' questions in a prompt fashion. There are few instances of registrants' e-mails inquiries being shuttled back and forth in an attempt to answer simple questions.

In past years (2006), the LOC was responsible for contacting people who were planning to participate at the conference but hadn't registered for either membership or the conference. The results were: a huge mess at the check in desk as many people tried to register last minute, and lost revenue as a lot of people managed to bypass registration completely and still participate because their names appeared in the conference programme.

In 2007 and 2008 we handled things a bit differently, I compared the conference list to the membership list, identified people who had not signed up for membership, and pestered them to register, while the LOC compared the submission list with the conference list to identify people who had submitted papers but had not registered for the conference. They sent out their own pestering e-mails asking people to register for the conference. We realised, after 2008, that not only does this create a situation where some participants are getting e-mails from two different groups, often at different times, asking them to sign up for one or the other list – confusing and time consuming for everyone involved - but also, if the LOC is too busy (and they are often overwhelmed) not all non-registrants for the conference are nagged into registering and CASCA loses those registrations (fees too), AND more often than not the corresponding membership registration and fee too. In 2008 we estimated that CASCA lost approximately \$5000 because of this poorly orchestrated nagging process.

In 2009, we changed the process; the LOC was responsible to send me the list of submitters and I compared that against both conference and membership registration lists, identified people who needed to register for either membership or the conference (or both) and then sent one e-mail asking people to sign up for whatever was necessary. This was a bit more work for

the CRPM, but it is still saved time overall, was less annoying to the conference participants and resulted in less lost revenue for CASCA and the LOC.

Generally speaking this is a better process than that used in previous years but some tweaking of the system will be necessary for future joint conferences. In 2009 there were problems of miscommunication between myself (the CRPM) and my equivalent at the AES. Next joint conference, there will have to be an effort made to genuinely coordinate the nagging process and other conference business (I strongly suggest that the LOC structure their registration page so that people click on one 'registration' button, and then are given a choice to click on association affiliation (i.e. CASCA or AES), and then are presented with three links, the first for membership, the second for conference registration and then finally the paper submission link. I believe that this would be less confusing than the one big registration page with all information given in one shot). For CASCA-only conferences, however I believe the new consolidated nagging process will be very efficient.

For CASCA10, the conference held in coordination with the Congress and other societies, registration went reasonably well. I am sure a few registrants slipped through the cracks because communication and coordination is more difficult with the extra layers of bureaucracy. Given the confusing nature of the registration process and the need to put all conference registrations through a system controlled by the Congress, however, the process went as well as can be expected. The CRPM duties took more time this year, because of the unique nature of the conference – there were more e-mail questions to answer, more communications necessary between the organisers and myself, lists were harder to manage, etc.

I cannot tell whether the larger event made for better or worse CASCA attendance/registration. Being a larger event, the overall conference seemed to attract more interest. However, we lost some registrants to other societies and the petty annoyances associated with participating in an event this big seemed to turn off some potential participants. CASCA10 registration is lower than previous years.

List Serve Co-ordinator

The 'welcome to CASCA' e-mail that is sent out to all new registrants is an important tool for introducing members to the list serve and convincing them to add their name to the list. A confirmation message is sent to the list serve address every time someone signs-up. I often see names of individuals who have just received their welcome message on these confirmation e-mails.

214 messages were sent during the 2008 calendar year.

190 messages were sent during the 2009 calendar year.

The main problems with the list serve are:

1. Individuals trying to use the system as a personal promotional tool. Luckily this has been a minor issue, easily handled.
2. Spam, spam, spam, spam....also easily handled. I simply sift through incoming e-mails and delete the rubbish.
3. Sometimes I get e-mails only a couple of days before due dates expressed within the message. As I don't check the list serve every day and I'm sure recipients don't

always check their e-mail accounts on a daily basis, some list serve messages are obsolete by the time they are read (or are never sent out to begin with because they are already past due when I open them). This has not been a serious problem, however, I've only had a few e-mails too old to send out over the past few years.

Concordia University
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Concordia University
Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi
CREGÉS (CSSS-CAU Cavendish)
CUNY
CUNY and Memorial U
CUNY Graduate Center and John Jay College, CUNY
Dalhousie
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Dartmouth College
DePauw University
Douglas College
Drew University
Durham College
Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales
Ecole des Hautes études en sciences sociales
EI-CESI/IHEID
European University Institute
fatima jinnah women university
Golder Associates
Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies
Grande Prairie Regional College
Grant MacEwan University
Grant MacEwan University
Harvard University
HEC Montréal
Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group

Memorial University of Newfoundland
Mount Allison University
Mount Allison University
Mount Saint Vincent University
MUN (SWGC)
New York University
Newcastle University, UK
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NTNU, Norway
Ontario College of Art & Design
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Queens College
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Research Associate
Royal Military College of Canada
Saint Mary's University
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Temasek Polytechnic, Singapore
The Australian National University
the Firelight Group
The Ford Foundation
The University of Western Ontario
Thompson Rivers University
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University of California Santa Cruz
University of CALifornia, Berkeley
University of Chicago
University of Colorado at Boulder
University of Connecticut
University of Guelph
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University of New Brunswick
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of North Texas, Denton, TX USA
University of Northern British Columbia
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University of Prince Edward Island
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University of Regina
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Wolverine & Assoc. Inc.
York University
York University

