

Committee to Select the Winner of the Cole Prize

General Description

- Committee is standing
- Number of members is usually three
- A new Committee is appointed for each award

These prizes were founded in honor of Professor Frank Nelson Cole, who served as secretary of the AMS (1896-1920) and as editor-in-chief of the *Bulletin* of the AMS (1899-1920). The original fund was donated by Professor Cole from moneys presented to him on his retirement, was augmented by contributions from members of the Society, and was later doubled by his son, Charles A. Cole. The present endowment is \$5,000. The prizes are awarded under restrictions similar to those for the Bôcher Prize.

Principal Activities

There are two awards, the Cole Prize in Algebra and the Cole Prize in Number Theory.

The Cole Prize in Algebra is made every three years at the Annual (January) Meeting (2003, 2006, 2009, . . .). The award is made for a notable research memoir in algebra, which has appeared in the last six years. Either the recipient is a member of the Society or the memoir is published in a recognized North American journal.

The Cole Prize in Number Theory is made every three years at the Annual (January) Meeting (2002, 2005, 2008, . . .). The award is made for a notable research memoir in number theory, which has appeared in the last six years. Either the recipient is a member of the Society or the memoir is published in a recognized North American journal.

The Committee recommends a winner. The award is approved by the Council of the AMS, approval being delegated to the Executive Committee. See the report below from Halmos and Hochster that the Council adopted as procedure.

The award is supplemented by a Steele Prize from the AMS under the name of the Cole Prize. This is a matter of no concern to the selection committee.

Report of a subcommittee of the EC

A subcommittee of the EC consisting of Halmos and Hochster have written the following report.

COLLOQUIUM LECTURERS, GIBBS LECTURERS, PRIZE WINNERS

A report of a subcommittee of the EC

Certain of the Council's decisions (the selection of the Colloquium and Gibbs lectures and the selection of the recipients of the Society's prizes) have traditionally been delegated to special committees and then routinely approved by the EC. The procedure has not been totally satisfactory. (In most cases the EC gave rubber stamp approval, sometimes recommending committee didn't even produce its nominee's CV.)

As a compromise between, in effect, doing the work of the special committees (undesirable interference) and merely being informed of their decisions (insufficient supervision), the subcommittee recommends that the EC in the future use a system of combined input and pre-approval, as follows:

The special committees should submit to the EC their semifinal short list of choices (ordinarily two or three names for each slot), together with a one-page summary of the documentation justifying each name on the list, and to do so before receiving preliminary acceptable from the suggested nominees. The system should not be inflexible: if, for instance, the special committee feels strongly that there is a single obvious choice, it will suffice that that fact be communicated to the EC. For the Gibbs Lecturers, it would be desirable for the selection committee to provide some insight into the mathematical component of the proposed lecturers' work, not merely his credentials within his own area.

The EC should then comment on each name (“acceptable”, “unacceptable”, “excellent”), and possibly even suggest another name or two for the special committee's consideration. The final choice is to be left to the special committee. The EC is to be informed of it, but need no longer approve it.

Other Activities

Miscellaneous Information

The business of this committee can be done by mail, electronic mail, or telephone, expenses, which may be reimbursed by the Society.

Note to the Chair

Work done by committees on recurring problems may have value as precedent or work done may have historical interest. Because of this, the Council has requested that a central file system be maintained for the Society by the Secretary. Committees are reminded that records of work should be kept and submitted annually to the Secretary for archival purposes. Confidential material should be noted, so that it can be handled in a confidential manner.

Authorization

10/05/89

updated 3/91; 12/92; 3/94; 8/94; 5/95; 5/01, 12/01; 1/03; 8/09; 7/13 edited Note to the Chair

January 03, 2017, Council Minutes, Item 3.1

Clarified the charge to indicate that there are two distinct Cole prizes.

Past Members

A list of past and current members is available at

<http://www.ams.org/about-us/governance/committees/cole-past.html>

Past Winners: Cole Prize in Number Theory

<http://www.ams.org/profession/prizes-awards/pabrowse?purl=cole-prize-number-theory>

Past Winners: Cole Prize in Algebra

<http://www.ams.org/profession/prizes-awards/pabrowse?purl=cole-prize-algebra>

AMS Websites:

<http://www.ams.org/profession/prizes-awards/ams-prizes/cole-prize-number-theory>

<http://www.ams.org/profession/prizes-awards/ams-prizes/cole-prize-algebra>