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# From the AMS Secretary

## Report on the January 2004 Council Meeting

The AMS Council met in Phoenix, Arizona, on January 6, 2004. It conducted some standard business by appointing or reappointing several officers and two managing editors of journals and by receiving committee reports, both written and oral. It also acted on several nonstandard items, which are the subject of this report.

**New Prize.** The Council established a Prize for Exemplary Program or Achievement by a Mathematics Department. This prize will recognize a department that has distinguished itself by undertaking an unusual or particularly effective program of value to the mathematics community, internally or in relation to the rest of society. Examples might include a department that runs a notable minority outreach program, a department that has instituted an unusually effective industrial mathematics internship program, a department that has promoted mathematics so successfully that a large fraction of its university's undergraduate population majors in mathematics, or a department that has made some form of innovation in its research support to faculty and/or graduate students or that has created a special and innovative environment for some aspect of mathematics research. The prize will be given annually beginning in 2006, and the award will be \$1,200.

**Revised Criteria for AMS Life Membership.** In the fall 2003 AMS election, the membership approved a bylaws amendment that allows eligibility and dues level for life membership in the AMS to be set by the Council, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees. Acting on a recommendation of the Committee on the Profession, the Council approved new criteria under which a person may become a life member by making a single payment of dues, determined by age at the start of the membership year, as follows:

- Age 60 or above: five times ordinary high dues
- Age 50 or above: ten times ordinary high dues
- Age 40 or above: fifteen times ordinary high dues

A life member is relieved of all subsequent dues obligations while maintaining the status and privileges of ordinary members. A similar policy, subject to minor

additional boundary conditions, was approved concerning life membership by reciprocity. These policies will take effect for dues renewals in 2005.

**Modified Copyright Policy.** In September 2003 the Committee on Publications reviewed the Society's copyright policy for journal articles, proceedings, and collections. While the committee strongly endorsed the essence of that policy, it also recommended minor modifications in anticipation of potential future problems, and this recommendation was unanimously endorsed by the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees in November 2003. The Council approved the following:

### AMS Copyright Policy (for Journals, Proceedings, and Collections)

AMS desires that authors transfer copyright but permits authors to hold copyright in exchange for broad rights given to the AMS;

AMS will allow a flexible range of reproduction, including inclusions of AMS published articles in publications of other publishers without permission or fees and electronic distribution over the Internet as long as it is not part of a fee-based document delivery service;

AMS will at the time of publication permit an author to dedicate an article to the public domain 28 years after the date of publication.

The hope is that the new policy, where copyrights either are held by the publisher or belong to the public domain, will make it easier to reuse older material in new formats. Recent projects to digitize the past mathematical literature have revealed that author-held copyrights can be a severe impediment to that reuse. Further background, history, and argumentation on the subject can be found in Attachment E of the January 2004 Council minutes (see link at <http://www.ams.org/secretary/council-minutes.html>.)

**Revisions to the AMS Ethical Guidelines.** Upon recommendation of the Committee on the Profession, the Council adopted revisions to the AMS Ethical Guidelines. The additions mainly involve statements describing and deploring plagiarism, inserted to address a perceived need. The revisions also incorporate numerous editorial changes. The new guidelines can be viewed online at <http://www.ams.org/secretary/ethics.html>.