

AMERICAN MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY

Committee on Publications 2018 Annual Meeting SUMMARY REPORT

A meeting of the AMS Committee on Publications (CPub) was held on Friday and Saturday, September 14-15, 2018 at the Chicago O'Hare Hilton Hotel, O'Hare International Airport, Chicago, IL, 60666. Claudia Polini, chair, presided.

Actions taken by CPub include the following:

Minutes of Business by Mail

The January 3, 2018 minutes of business by mail were approved. The business conducted was to approve the minutes of the October 2017 CPub meeting.

Subcommittee to Review 2009 CoProf Culture Statement on Citation and Impact

In discussion stemming from Executive Editor Edward Dunne's report on *Mathematical Reviews*, concerns raised regarding the commercialized use of citation and Impact Factor data by for-profit companies led to the formation of a subcommittee tasked with reviewing the 2009 AMS Committee on the Profession (CoProf) statement, "[The Culture of Research and Scholarship in Mathematics: Citation and Impact in Mathematical Publications.](#)" Subcommittee members Andreas Frommer (Mathematical Reviews Editorial Committee), Ilya Kapovich (subcommittee chair, CPub) and Michael Singer (CPub) will work in consultation with Executive Editor Dunne to review CoProf's 2009 statement and determine if it should be updated. A report on the subcommittee's work and any resulting recommendations are expected to be completed by the end of 2018.

Journal of the AMS Editorial Committee Charge

In 2016, at the request of the Editorial Boards Committee, AMS Executive Director Don McClure approved an increase in the number of editors on the Journal of the AMS Editorial Committee from six to seven. To reflect this change, Secretary Savage requested that CPub endorse revising the General Description of the editorial committee's [charge](#) from "Number of members is approximately six" to "Number of members is approximately seven" for approval by Council. CPub approved the revision, and its recommendation will go to the January 2019 Council for approval.

2018 Annual Review – Review of the AMS Book Program

A subcommittee of CPub members consisting of Henry Cohn, Javad Mashreghi, Claudia Polini (chair) and Victor Reiner conducted the 2018 review of the AMS Book Program.

The subcommittee's review focused on evaluating how effectively the Book Program serves the needs of the mathematical community and assessed the following aspects: scientific quality, scientific scope, reaching different audiences, and support for authors.

In 2016, an extensive review of the AMS Book Program covering the decade 2005-2015 was conducted. For its review, the 2018 subcommittee examined the report of the 2016 review, collected additional data on books published during 2014-2017 and conducted surveys of AMS members, authors of AMS monographs, authors of monographs published elsewhere, and MAA members.

The general findings of the review indicate the AMS Book Program is doing a good job of serving the AMS community as a whole, and that the scientific level of the program is increasing and is similar to that of other well-known and established publishers such as Springer, Cambridge and Princeton. Areas noted for improvement include the following:

- Increase awareness – Raise awareness of what AMS can offer authors and to members who want to become prospective authors. As specific to the AMS/MAA Press merger, be aware of concerns regarding preserving the unique identities of the two societies.
- e-books – Price AMS e-books considerably lower than their print counterparts.
- Marketing – Do a more aggressive job of marketing and publicizing AMS books.
- Peer review – Adopt more thorough peer review practices for undergraduate level works.
- Applied mathematics – Continue to look for opportunities to expand AMS’s offerings in applied math.

CPub unanimously moved to accept the subcommittee’s report with thanks, noting these areas for reexamination at the time of the next Book Program review in 2021.

CPub Subcommittee to Investigate Additional Research Publications

At the May 2018 Executive Committee and Board of Trustees (ECBT) meeting, discussion of the *Transactions of the AMS* backlog issue resulted in consensus that AMS should look into ways to publish more research content and that the initial discussion toward this end should be undertaken by CPub. Following the ECBT meeting, CPub Chair Claudia Polini appointed a subcommittee, the CPub Subcommittee to Investigate Additional Research Publications (CPub-ARP), consisting of Joseph Silverman (chair), Henry Cohn, Sergei Gelfand, and Amie Wilkinson, to “investigate and put together a short list of options that would enable the AMS to publish additional research mathematics” to present to CPub at the time of its September 2018 meeting.

CPub discussed the subcommittee’s report, which outlines pros and cons of three publication models and four publication options and also includes comments solicited from CPub, the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees (ECBT), the Editorial Boards Committee (EBC) and AMS staff, and voted to expand the current subcommittee to include CPub member Victor Reiner and Associate Executive Director for Publishing Robert Harington, who will replace Sergei Gelfand. The subcommittee’s work will now focus on developing a specific proposal for consideration by CPub, ECBT, and the Council in 2019.

Peer Review for AMS Journals

In AMS’s history, use of double-blind refereeing for the Society’s publications is limited to use by *Proceedings* for a five-year trial period in the mid-1970s. The trial was ordered by a Council decision initiated by Mary W. Gray, which resulted in a lot of controversy and objections, and has not been reexamined since. In a proposal from President Elect Jill Pipher, CPub was asked to consider if a switch to double-blind review or open review would help the AMS reduce bias within

the mathematical community and if a subcommittee should be formed to more thoroughly examine these models and issues of transparency in peer review.

C Pub voted to form a subcommittee charged with considering various issues related to transparency in peer review and to specifically address the question of whether double-blind refereeing should be instituted for some or all AMS journals. Subcommittee members include Henry Cohn (chair), Robert Harington (staff liaison), Ken Ono, Brooke Shipley, Michael Singer, and Committee on Women in Mathematics Chair Chad Michael Topaz. The subcommittee is to focus solely on the matter of policy (i.e., whether double-blind refereeing is a policy that reflects AMS's standards and goals), exclusive of implementation, and report its findings at C Pub's 2019 meeting.

Other Business:

AMS/MAA Press

Publisher Sergei Gelfand provided C Pub with an overview of the history and current status of AMS's acquisition of the MAA Press book program and led discussion on related goals and challenges.

Topics discussed included the following:

- Overview of the MAA Book Program and its series
- Merging MAA titles into AMS's Book Program
- Acquisitions staff and editorial committees
- AMS's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan
- Series identity and marketing

Institutional Open Access Policies Subcommittee

In 2016, the Joint C Pub/CoProf Subcommittee on Open Access Policies was established to study open access policies as they relate to faculties', publishers' and schools' rights for faculty-authored scholarly articles. The subcommittee's report was presented at the 2017 meeting, and C Pub requested that the subcommittee work with AMS staff to prepare an article for publication in the *Notices* to raise awareness on open access policies. Chair Henry Cohn reported that the subcommittee expects to submit the article to the *Notices* this fall.

Web Advisory Group (WAG)

Per C Pub's recommendation, the Web Editorial Group was disbanded by Council decision in January 2018. In order to keep C Pub advised on matters concerning AMS website content, C Pub member Nathan Dunfield was appointed as a liaison to WAG and participated in WAG's activities throughout 2018.

Professor Dunfield gave a brief update on the work of the WAG, noting that web content matters have been intentionally reduced while efforts are focused on web infrastructure and redesign.

Following the meeting, Professor Dunfield accepted Executive Director Roberts' invitation to continue as the C Pub liaison to WAG in 2019.

Staff provided reports on the following items:

- 2016-2020 Strategic Plan
- eBook Program
- Journal Backlogs
- *Mathematical Reviews/MathSciNet®*

2019 Annual Review

In 2018, Council approved revising CPub's charge to modify its four-year review schedule to conduct reviews on a three-year cycle as follows:

- Year 1: AMS Book Program
- Year 2: Primary Journals (JAMS, MCOM, PAMS, TAMS)
- Year 3: Member Journals (*Bulletin, Notices, Abstracts*) and All Other Journals (electronic only, translation, and distributed journals)

In 2019, an evaluation of the primary journals (JAMS, MCOM, PAMS, and TRAN) will be conducted, and the primary journal managing editors will be invited guests of CPub's 2019 meeting.

Next Meeting

The next CPub meeting will be held September 20-21, 2019 at the AMS Headquarters in Providence, RI.

Sergei Gelfand
Publisher
November 20, 2018