

Officers Board Meeting of the Byzantine Studies Association of North America, Inc.

Friday, January 22, 2021

9:00 – 10:00 AM ET, Zoom

Minutes (approved 12/9/2021)

Present: Lynn Jones, Byron MacDougall, Brad Hostetler, Tia Kolbaba, Galina Tirnanic, Hannah Ewing, Ruma Salhi, Benjamin Anderson, Cecily Hilsdale, Alexander Riehle, Felege-Selam Solomon Yirga, Fotini Kondyli, Meredith Riedel, George Demacopoulos, Leonora Neville, Alice Sullivan (minutes).

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of minutes for the meeting on Tuesday, November 24, 2020

Alexander moves. Hannah second.

3. BSC date: December 9-12, 2021

- Program: retained Speakers, streaming/hybridity (Speakers, business lunch, 2 sessions for Helen Evans, grad committee, Jaharis events), lost evening reception

4. Program Committee:

Galina Tirnanic CFP date: April 19

Discussion about possibly moving the deadline for submissions since the conference is later. But there was consensus that the deadline for the proposals should be kept to April 19.

Hybrid sessions: The Board has suggested planning for 1-2 hybrid sessions at BSC 2021.

- Streaming: Speakers, Business Lunch, Jaharis event/s
- Hybrid: 2 Sessions for Helen Evans, Grad Comm. Session, 1 or 2 designated hybrid session/s

Sessions in honor of Helen Evans: Although unusual for BSANA, the Board is in support. We have learned that the MJC is not organizing anything special for Helen, and the Met had a “coffee” send-off, but she deserves more. She is an exception in our field and the Board has agreed to honor her at BSC 2021. Main reasoning: while other scholars at universities tend to have students who organize such events to honor their careers, Helen does not.

Graduate Committee session: This will be organized after the GC is formed. The Program Committee will be evaluating that proposal as well on its own merits.

Graduate student abstracts accepted for BSC 2020 but withdrawn: The Board discussed the issue of automatic acceptances for BSC 2021 of those abstracts submitted by graduate students in 2020 but subsequently withdrawn from the virtual conference. Many things could have affected their decision not to participate in 2020, and those students should have a chance to present at the BSC 2021.

The Board has discussed various options, including:

- Involving last year's Program Committee to identify the students who had papers accepted but withdrew (not many)
- Asking students to resubmit and be reevaluated with the rest of the submissions for 2021 (and in accordance with the wording of the acceptance email from 2020)
- Asking students to indicate that their paper was accepted in 2020

The main issue is that if those students resubmit and their abstracts are re-evaluated by a new Program Committee, they run the risk of their proposals being rejected. In part, this relates to the concern in imbalance and disparity between institutions with research access limited to some. The influx of new student submissions could put the past submissions at a disadvantage.

The Board decided not to involve last year's Program Committee and instead ask the graduate students who are resubmitting to identify themselves in EasyChair. Byron, as VP, will hold on to that information and manage it on a case-by-case basis in conversation with the Program Committee. The Board has agreed to not ask for a reason for why the 2020 paper was withdrawn and put in place this new procedure only for this year and only for graduate students.

MJC-sponsored session: the MJC would like the session to go forward, so it will be resubmitted for BSC 2021.

For other pre-organized sessions, which are welcome, each paper will be accepted on its individual merits. For BSC 2021, each abstract will be vetted on its own, except for those of graduate students, which were accepted in 2020 but not presented due to circumstances related to the pandemic.

5. Advocacy Committee and DEI Committee

Both committees will draft a Statement of Purpose and scope for publication on the new website.

The DEI Committee (Ruma, Byron, Fotini, Felege) will oversee and promote the Byzantinists of Color Fund.

From the few related responses on the post-BSC surveys, the Board has gathered that most need is in support for completion of doctoral requirements (“micro-grants” for language study, etc.). The DEI Committee should propose a provisional budget for the year and make suggestions for how the money will be spent. The Committee will convene and present the Statement of Purpose and the proposals to the Executive Committee.

6. Graduate Committee

We have received 8 applications for the new Graduate Committee (GC) of BSANA (fewer than expected). Initially, the Board had considered selecting 6 of the 8 applicants, 3 to serve 1-year terms. However, the Board decided to accept all applicants on the new GC and allow the members to decide on the future configuration, mission, etc. of the committee. The inaugural members include:

PhDs

- Aurora Camaro Simon Fraser archaeology, 4th yr (no preference)
- Anna Carroll NYU art history, 3rd yr (2 years)
- Justin Mann UVA archaeology, candidate, (2 years)
- Caitlin Mims, FSU art history, 3rd yr (2 years)
- Jake Ransohoff, Harvard history, candidate (1 year)
- James Razumoff UVA art history, 3rd yr (2 years)

MAAs

- Madison Gilmore-Duffy FSU, 2 years
- Tiffany Von WinKoop Simon Fraser, 2 years

The Executive Board will oversee the GC during the first year; President consults in setting up session and process for election of new members, Communication Officer consults in scheduling and promotion. It had been decided that the GC will have as much autonomy as possible, and a report will be delivered to the membership at the BSC Business Lunch.

The GC will have a Dedicated Session at the BSC, and the graduate student speakers will be included in the count of graduate presentations at BSC. (Stated range of 20-25% cap on grad speakers for 2021 BSC.)

7. Website: Brad Hostetler

The new BSANA website has been delivered and transferred to WordPress hosting site, which is lower cost than the old platform at Toronto. Brad has coordinated the transition and will follow-up with Inforest for final issues. We website now requires content editing, including a diverse array of images. Once that is in place, Brad will circulate the new site to the Board for feedback. We plan to launch it in February.

8. Board meeting in 3 months, if required.

9. Meeting Adjourned.