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Philadelphia, PA 19103

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Fordham University
Bronx, NY 10458

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Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33314

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The Cooper Union
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International Representative**
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History Representative
Gary Owens
University of Western Ontario

Literature Representative
Elizabeth Butler Cullingford
University of Texas

Social Science Representative
Andrew J. Wilson
Loyola University, Chicago

Irish Language Representative
Angela Bourke
University College, Dublin

Celtic Studies Representative
Colin Ireland
Beaver College, CEA, Dublin

Arts Representative
Cheryl Herr
University of Iowa

Mid-Atlantic Representative
Sr. Mary Hubert Kealy
Immaculata College

Midwest Representative
Charles Fanning
Southern Illinois University (Carbondale)

New England Representative
Conor Johnston
Massasoit Community College

Southern Representative
Richard Bizot
University of North Florida

Western Representative
Ann Owens Weekes

The ACIS Newsletter

ACIS ELECTIONS: A CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Acting Chair of the Nominations Committee, Elizabeth Mitchell, has issued a call for nominations for the positions of President, Vice-President, and the six Discipline Representatives (see the categories on the ACIS letterhead). Any ACIS member eligible to vote (dues-paying members of ACIS as of Dec. 1, 1998) may nominate any other eligible member. To nominate someone, you must

- 1) confirm the nominee's willingness to serve if elected, and to attend the executive committee meetings of the ACIS in Limerick (June, 2000) and at the national meeting in 2001. New members of the Executive Committee will also meet briefly in Roanoke (May, 1999).
- 2) send the following materials to Dr. Elizabeth Mitchell, 52 Stillwell Road, Kendall Park, New Jersey 08824:
 - a) a letter of nomination, stating the nominee's qualifications for the office and confirming that the nominee has agreed to serve as stated above;
 - b) a typed c.v. of no more than three pages, including all major publications, especially those in Irish Studies; academic and administrative experience; educational background and papers delivered; and
 - c) a list of all ACIS service, including such information as work in regional organizations, other committee work, and papers delivered at ACIS conferences.

The deadline for receipt of nominations is Tuesday, Dec. 1, 1998. Nominations must be sent by regular mail.

Early in 1999 dues-paying ACIS members will receive a ballot with the names of the nominees selected by the Nominations Committee and summaries of their qualifications; the address to which ballots should be sent; and the deadline for receipt of ballots. The new officers and discipline representatives will take office in the course of the national meeting at Roanoke, May 12-15, 1999.

Because Nancy Curtin has chosen not to succeed automatically as president (see page two), there will be a vacancy in the office of president in May, 1999, as well as in the office of vice-president. According to the ACIS bylaws, VB, "The President will fill vacancies which may arise on the Executive Committee between elections. Should a vacancy arise in the office of Vice-President, the member appointed will not succeed automatically to the office of President on completion of the term of office. An election for President will be held at the time of the next election for membership on the Executive committee." Therefore, the person who wins the election for president will serve as president 1999-2001 and as past president & international representative 2001-2003. The person who wins the election for vice-president will serve as vice-president 1999-2001, president 2001-2003, and past president & international representative 2003-2005. Nancy Curtin has recused herself from the Nominations Committee. A new chair of the Nominations Committee, will be announced in the December issue of the Newsletter. In the meantime, Elizabeth Mitchell has agreed to serve as acting chair of the Nominations Committee and to receive nominations. The other members of the Nominations Committee are Elizabeth Cullingford, James MacKillop, and Mary Helen Thuente.

ACIS AT MLA

ACIS will again host two panels at the MLA in San Francisco. The first, "Irish Literature and Popular Culture" will be chaired by Susan Harris, University of Notre Dame, and will feature Lucy McDiarmid, Villanova University; "Yeats, Paudeen, Lane, Hogan, and the popularizing of High Culture"; Richard Haslam, St. Joseph's University "A Race Bashed in the Face: Imagining Ireland as a Damaged Child"; and Spurgeon Thompson, University of Notre Dame, "Literary Locales and the popularization of Irish Writing in Tourist Discourse." The second panel is titled The Politics of Gender in Irish Writing. Chaired by Marjorie Howes, Rutgers University, this panel will feature Julia Wright, University of Waterloo "Engendering Colonial Harmony: Modeling the Imperial Relationship in Irish Romantic Literature"; Maureen Waters, Queen's College, CUNY, "Yeats: Subverting Lady Gregory"; Michael W. Cadden, Princeton University. "Frank McGuinness: Homosexualizing the Troubles"; and Margot Backus, St. John Fisher College "Armed to the Teeth and Undressed to Kill": Mary Dorcey's Feminist Reunification." For more information contact ACIS Literature Representative Elizabeth Cullingford, English Department, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712. Phone: (512) 472-0741.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the ACIS Executive Committee meetings and general business sessions at the Albany (MacKillop administration) and Fort Lauderdale (McDiarmid administration) conferences will be available this autumn at the ACIS Website: <http://athena.english.vt.edu/ACIS/FRONTPAGE.HTML>.

Dues-paying ACIS members wanting paper copies should send a self-addressed envelope after Oct. 15 to ACIS President Lucy McDiarmid (using the address on the letterhead) or to any of the regional representatives.

VICE-PRESIDENT POST WILL APPEAR ON NEXT ACIS BALLOT

Vice-president Nancy Curtin has issued the following statement regarding the forthcoming ACIS elections:

"Members may recall that I ran for the office of vice-president and president-elect of ACIS unopposed in the 1997 election. The MacKillop-Thuente report included in this issue details the circumstances for this unsatisfactory but not unprecedented breach of the principle of contested elections. My election has been challenged only recently, on the grounds that, as a member of the nominations committee which put the ballot together, I effectively and improperly nominated myself. Appearances could certainly support that conclusion. But as the report states, I agreed to run only after the other nominees withdrew, persuaded that at least one name on the ballot would be better than none. My involvement in the nominations committee up to that point had been minimal and I effectively, but not formally, recused myself from committee deliberations once I had agreed to be nominated.

"I can only assume that these procedural challenges to my election, coming so late after the fact, reflect concerns about the direction that ACIS might take under my direction. Perhaps they are connected with broader anxieties expressed by some members about the content of ACIS conferences and publications. In order to allow members the choice which circumstances denied them in 1997, and to affirm the Executive Committee's commitment to the principle of contested elections, I have chosen not to succeed automatically to the office of president. Thus, the office of president will be included on the next ballot. I shall continue to perform my duties as vice-president until the term of the current Executive Committee expires, but as I am willing to be nominated and to run for the office of president if my name is selected for the ballot, I must recuse myself from the nominations committee."

COMMITTEE ON MISSION AND PROCEDURES

In accordance with a motion passed at the business meeting at the 1998 ACIS Annual Meeting that "a committee of five people, elected by members of the executive committee be established to re-evaluate the mission and procedures of ACIS" and "to issue a report on its re-evaluation to the executive committee by Oct. 31, 1998," the following committee has been elected and welcomes input from members about ACIS mission and procedures:

Monica Brennan, History Dept., St. Joseph's College
Patchogue NY 11772

Katie Conrad English Dept., University of Kansas
Lawrence KS 66045

Adele Dalsimer, Irish Studies, Boston College
Chestnut Hill MA 02167

Susan Harris, English Dept., University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame IN 46556

Mary Helen Thuente, English Dept., Indiana-Purdue University
Ft. Wayne IN 46805

ACIS members will receive copies of a survey and the ACIS bylaws in Sept. The committee also invites members to send their views by letter or memo to the committee at the above postal addresses or by E-mail to adhoc-camp@news.vill.edu

TIME TO RE-UP!

ACIS dues notices for Sept. 1998-Aug. 1999 have been sent from the treasurer. Memberships should be renewed immediately to reduce cost of subsequent mailings. Information: harrin@cooper.edu.

CALLS FOR PAPERS

Southern Regional in February

The Tenth Annual Southern Regional Conference will be held at Clemson University in South Carolina, Feb. 25-27, 1999. The theme is "Ireland in the Arts and Humanities, 1899-1999." Submissions by graduate students as well as by established scholars in all areas and periods of Irish studies are invited. Creative writers, artists, folklorists, and musicologists are also invited to submit work on Irish themes (an abstract and 2-5 pages of sample work will help to develop panel ideas). Send one page abstracts and panel proposals by Nov. 1st to: Wayne Chapman, Dept. of English
Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina 29634-1503,
Phone (864) 656-5399, Fax (864) 656-1345; E-mail: cwayne@clemson.edu

Graduate Irish Studies Conference

The 11th Graduate Irish Studies Conference, "The Scattered Seeds of Erin," will be held at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Mar. 26-28, 1999. One-page abstracts of papers on any subjects within Irish Studies are welcome from graduate students in the field. E-Mail or snail mail by Dec. 1, 1998, to: Laura Halliday (halliday@siu.edu) or Eva White (evaw@siu.edu), Dept. of English, Faner Hall, SIU-Carbondale, IL 62901-4503. Web site at SIU: <http://www.lib.siu.edu/projects/irish/>

Nui-Galway in 2000

"Creativity and the Irish; New Frontiers" will take the pulse of 'Irishness' as a field of academic scholarship, a source of intellectual enquiry and of cultural creativity, and as a renaissance agenda in the field for the new millenium. This will be an international conference in the field of Irish Studies at National University of Ireland, Galway, June 10-16, 2000. For more information contact Declan Ashe. E-mail: d.ashe@admin4.ucg.ie

ACIS at AHA

The ACIS will jointly sponsor with the American Historical Association a featured session at the 1999 Conference of the AHA in Washington, D.C. in January. The theme of the conference is "Diasporas and Migrations in History" and our session will be titled, " 'Out of Ireland': Approaches to the Study of Irish Migrations to North America." Participants will be Tom Archdeacon (University of Wisconsin - Madison), Kevin Kenny (University of Texas - Austin), and Ruth-Ann Harris (Boston College), Presenters; Kevin O'Neill (Boston College), Commentator; Gary Owens (Huron College, University of Western Ontario), Chair. Proposals for papers and/or a panel at the year 2000 AHA Conference in Chicago, Jan. 6-9, 2000, should be sent to: Gary Owens, ACIS History Rep.
Huron College, University of Western Ontario
1349 Western Road, London, Ontario, Canada, N6G 1H3.
Deadline: Feb. 1, 1999.

FT. LAUDERDALE PROCEEDINGS

Members who presented a paper at the Ft. Lauderdale meeting in April and are interested in publishing it in the *Proceedings* should send Jim Doan a hard copy and diskette in WP or other PC-compatible program as soon as possible. (See address on front page and elsewhere.)

CALLS FOR PAPERS

"The Presence of the Past"

Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory seeks papers for a special issue on "Ireland: The Presence of the Past" The editors seek essays which examine the ways Ireland's historical, political, and social past has been commemorated, remembered, preserved, and created. Essays must provide theoretical analyses of literary texts which in some way represent the cultural memory of Ireland. The editors welcome analyses of film, drama, and literary texts of any period. (5000-10,000 words; MLA). Deadline for submissions is Oct. 1, 1998. Send essays in triplicate (if outside U.S. or Canada, one copy will do) to: Barbara A. Suess

English Dept.,
Box U-25 Univ. of Connecticut
Storrs, CT, 06269-1025.

Postcolonial Studies

JOUVERT: A Journal of Postcolonial Studies announces a special issue on "Ireland 2000." JOUVERT is a refereed electronic journal located at <http://social.chass.ncsu.edu/jouvert>

This special issue will focus on Ireland and the Irish Diaspora at century's end. The editors welcome papers concerned with any aspect of Irish and Irish Diaspora politics, economics, culture, religion and/or history, especially those working within or in critical relation to postcolonial theories and practices. They are particularly interested in essays, reviews and interviews that take advantage of the journal's multimedia capabilities. Submit abstracts by Jan. 15, 1999 to: Maria Pramaggiore
Dept. of English
North Carolina State University,
Raleigh, NC 27695-8105.
Phone (919) 515-4138,
Fax: (919) 515-1836;
E-mail: maria_p@unity.ncsu.edu

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FUNDING FOR IRISH-AMERICAN RESEARCH

The Irish American Cultural Institute (IACI) is accepting applications from researchers to investigate the Irish experience in America. Original research and assistance for travel and publication costs, can be funded up to \$5,000. The IACI has three funds given by the Irish Institute of New York, the O'Shaughnessy family of Minn., and Philadelphia's Friendly sons of St. Patrick. Some preference can be given to projects examining the region of the fund's origin. The deadline for application is Oct. 1. For application:

Irish Research Fund
IACI, 1 Lackawanna Place
Morristown NJ 07960
Phone: (973) 605-1991
E-mail: irishwaynj@aol.com

SECOND ACIS ANNUAL IN THE WORKS

The second volume of the ACIS Annual, Politics and Performance in Contemporary Northern Ireland, will be launched at the national convention in Roanoke and mailed to members in spring 1999. A third volume is in preparation. An ad-hoc committee has been formed to report on the future of the series. The chair is John Harrington (arrin@cooper.edu), and the committee members are Anthony Bradley, Charles Fanning, Elizabeth Mitchell, and Maureen Waters. The committee solicits information, opinions and questions about the annual.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

100 Years of Irish Theatre

A seminar sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, "One Hundred Years of Irish Theatre," will be held at Indiana University-Bloomington from May 26-29, 1999, under the directorship of Stephen Watt. In addition to the presentation of some 25 full-length papers on this topic, the seminar will also include theatregoing; at present, a production of Frank McGuinness's "Someone Who'll Watch Over Me" is planned along with two other plays to be announced later.

Because the NEH required a complete roster of participants and topics before it could consider the granting of a fellowship, most of the seminarians have already been selected. They include Christopher Murray, Anthony Roche, Mary Trotter, Liz Cullingford, Claudia Harris, Lucy McDiarmid, James Hurt, R.B. Kershner, Jose Lanters John Harrington, Sanford Sternlicht, Judith Roof, Gary Richardson, Lauren Onkey, Michael Gillespie, Laura Lyons and others. If you would like to suggest a full-length paper, please write to Watt or to Eileen Morgan, Dept. of English, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405. Moderators and respondents are needed for the seminar. A full selection of seminar papers will be available four to six weeks in advance of the meeting.

Celtic Studies at NYU

The 1999 Celtic Studies Association of North America conference will take place under the auspices of the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York and of Glucksman Ireland House at New York University. Conference dates are April 8-11, 1999. Further information and a call for papers will be issued in September. Contact:

Catherine McKenna
Medieval Studies Certificate Program, Graduate School and University Center
CUNY, 33 West 42nd Street,
New York, NY 10036
Phone: (212) 642-2314;
E-mail: cmckenna@email.gc.cuny.edu or cmckenna@cuny.campus.mci.net

ACIS National in Virginia

Johann Norstedt reports that interest in next year's ACIS national meeting is "brisk," but notes that the conference program remains, in his words, "wide open." Members may still meet the Sept. 30 deadline for proposals. Consult the ACIS Web site, for the latest information.
Web: <http://athena.english.vt.edu/ACIS/FROTPAGE.HTML>

Out to sea with the Southern Regional

The Cruise Conference for Southern ACIS in 2000 (Feb. 4-7, Miami-Nassau) is about to send a call for abstracts due Feb. 1, 1999. However the logistics of booking the cruise demand a \$25 per person deposit from interested people by Nov. 1 to hold space. The total cost, including rooms, meals and port charges (not alcohol) is \$425 or \$475 p.p. for double occupancy (inside or ocean-view cabin, respectively), or \$755/\$805 for single occupancy. Checks should be sent payable to:

James Doan
Dept. of Liberal Arts, Nova Southeastern University
Ft. Lauderdale FL 33314
Phone (954) 262-8207
E-mail: doan@polaris.acast.nova.edu.
(Mary Donnelly is in charge of the conference program).
E-mail: Mangansis@aol.com

Report on ACIS Nominations and Elections Procedures

James MacKillop and Mary Helen Thuente, April 10, 1998

At the request of ACIS President Lucy McDiarmid, we have prepared this report which reviews ACIS nominations and elections procedures and addresses four concerns about the present process that were raised on behalf of members of the Midwest Regional ACIS at the 1997 meeting in Albany.

The present process recognizes that the Nominations and Elections Committee embodies a great deal of authority and power because members are appointed by the ACIS president and chaired by the president-elect. Therefore a fundamental principle in the comments below, which are based on our extensive experience on the ACIS Executive Committee, is that Nominations and Elections Committees should be able to accomplish their task of preparing a slate of candidates without undue constraint. Nothing in our experience in working on and with this committee indicates that more detailed procedures and guidelines are necessary or want the time-consuming process of amending the ACIS Bylaws. The standard procedure when questions have arisen during the nomination process has been for the chair of the Nominations Committee to consult with the ACIS president and past-presidents. As chair of the Nominations Committee in 1997, Lucy McDiarmid consulted with two past ACIS presidents (Murphy and Thuente) and the incumbent ACIS president (MacKillop) as she worked to complete the nomination process in a timely fashion.

1. Should the role of the nominating committee be more proactive in guarding against uncontested candidacies?

The traditional call for nominations that is published in the fall ACIS newsletter is an adequate and successful means of obtaining nominations, and when additional candidates have been needed due to special circumstances the committee has always been successful in finding appropriate persons for each office. However, we recommend that the call for nominations be printed on the first page of the newsletter. We note the call for nominations in the last election was not placed, as it always had been in the past, on the first page of the newsletter [copies of the relevant sections of the ACIS newsletters for Fall 1990, 1992, 1994, and 1996 were attached to the report], a change that may account for there having been perhaps somewhat fewer nominations received in the last election. In any event, the original number of nominations received for the office of vice-president was the standard number of two. After the two candidates nominated withdrew for personal reasons, the Nominations Committee faced the unusual situation of suddenly having no candidate for vice-president at a late stage in the nomination process. However, there is no set number of nominees for any office; for example, the number of nominees for the office of vice-president has varied from one candidate (the elections of Maureen Murphy and Robert Rhodes) to three (the election of Blanche Touhill, who ran against Rob Garratt and Michael Kenneally).

2. Should members of the nominating committee be able to stand for election?

Members of the Nominations Committee should not be prohibited from standing for election, especially when unexpected situations such as developed in the 1997 election occur in regard to the office of Vice President. In the last election, after Nancy Curtin (a member of the Nominations Committee) expressed willingness to run for the vice-presidency when both of the original candidates had withdrawn, Lucy McDiarmid was advised by President James MacKillop that if another nomination were received, Nancy Curtin should withdraw from the committee. However, no other nominations were received.

3. Should nominees be involved in selecting other candidates?

In our experience, nominees, who after all will be working closely with other colleagues elected to the Executive Committee, are often a good source of names of other possible nominees. They have a stake in finding strong candidates for office. Input from nominees also expands the possible pool of applicants, which is important as the organization grows and members of the Nominations Committee, which does not represent all disciplines within the organization, have only a limited knowledge of members, especially those who might only have been active at the regional level.

4. Should members from outside of North America serve on the Executive Committee?

Membership on the Executive Committee should not be restricted to members in North America. Electronic forms of communication overcome delays once caused by transatlantic mail. Our experience shows that North American residence does not guarantee attendance when the Executive Committee meets in the U.S. One North American member of the Executive Committee in the recent past did not attend a meeting in four years.

In sum, we believe that the current ACIS nominations and elections procedures are appropriate and effective. We recommend, however, that future calls for nominations be placed prominently on the first page of the newsletter as they had been in elections prior to 1996.

Executive Committee Reports Relating to the National Meeting

Introduction

Material from recent reports about ACIS national meetings and other matters are printed below in response to queries made at the business session in Ft. Lauderdale about "policy" and the conference program. In 1991, 1996/7, and 1998, in the Donnelly, MacKillop, and McDiarmid presidencies, the ACIS Executive requested, discussed, and accepted reports on the annual national meeting of the ACIS. A report by James MacKillop (Recommendations...ACIS Conventions) was approved by the Executive Committee at the Madison, Wisc. meeting in April 1991 but was never distributed to the membership. It is too long to be printed here but is available from James MacKillop (mackillj@aurora.suny-occ.edu). A report authored by James J. Blake (Irish Language Representative, 1993-95) in his role as chair of the Policy Committee was handed out to the Executive Committee at the Belfast meeting in June, 1995, and accepted by the Executive Committee at the Carbondale meeting in April, 1996; at the Albany meeting in April 1997 the Executive Committee reaffirmed its approval of this Policy Report. This report, like the previous one, was never distributed to the membership. Excerpts from it are printed below. In the autumn of 1997, after a number of ACIS members who submitted paper proposals for the national meeting before the announced deadline were told that the program was "already full," Lucy McDiarmid decided that the procedure by which proposals were selected needed to be clarified and formalized, to ensure that all proposals submitted on time were given equal consideration. The report on program procedures was presented to the Executive Committee in draft form in winter 1998, discussed over E-mail, and presented in revised form at the Executive Committee meeting in Fort Lauderdale in April, 1998. At that time it was discussed once more. After minor revisions were made, it was accepted unanimously by the Executive Committee. It is printed below. Although the group issuing it has at various times called itself the "Program Committee," the "Program Procedures Committee," and the "Program Policy Procedures Committee," its report is not a report of a "Policy Committee," as was Jim Blake's. During the April 15 meeting of the Executive Committee in which it was discussed, committee chair Nancy Curtin

emphasized the need for flexibility, suggesting that from year to year changes will inevitably occur in the way the program is put together. Several members of the Executive Committee pointed out that these were only "guidelines," not bylaws or policy, and thus may be changed or even ignored by future Executive Committees.

POLICY REPORT

James J. Blake, Irish Language Representative, 1993-95

Submitted to the Executive Committee June 25, 1995. Accepted by the Executive Committee at their meeting in Carbondale in April 1996; approval was reaffirmed by the Executive Committee at their meeting in Albany in April, 1997.

Members who would like copies of the entire report should get in touch with James MacKillop (see previous paragraph for E-mail address), who was ACIS president at the time.

I. Annual conference in Ireland no more frequently than every five years.

The ACIS should abide by its own "Guidelines" which state in Section 3 ("Regional Meetings"), that "international meetings should not exceed five days. International meetings should take place every fourth to sixth year.

ACIS should not hold the annual meeting in Ireland more frequently than every five years. The focus of ACIS should be on establishing, enriching, and strengthening Irish Studies programs in the United States, particularly these days when the Humanities and state funding for the Humanities and college budgets are under attack.

ACIS should maintain warm and cordial relations with Irish colleagues and their institutions at a distance and from a more secure position within institutional academic life in the United States. ACIS needs to avoid sliding into the complexities of academic — and other — politics in all parts of Ireland.

ACIS should follow its own "By-laws," Section I (Purpose) A, which states that "the American Conference for Irish Studies exists...to promote Irish Studies as a legitimate and distinct course of studies in American colleges, universities and secondary schools..." Furthermore, according to IB, "In order to maintain the essential purpose of the organization, members involved in political and social action are not permitted to use the name of the American Conference for Irish Studies in support of their activities."

There is no reference to international meetings in the bylaws.

II. Candidates for Discipline and Regional Representatives on the Executive Committee.

A. Candidates for positions as representatives to the Executive Committee should be clearly informed that they must attend all Executive Committee meetings, particularly those scheduled well in advance, such as the meetings planned for each annual conference.

B. Representatives whose two-year period of service has just ended should supply the newly elected representative with all the reports (including financial reports for the regional representative) produced during their two years of service. The old and new discipline representatives should exchange home and academic addresses and telephone numbers [and E-mail addresses] to ensure continuity.

C. Cordiality and collegiality cannot be legislated. However, greater efforts should be made to facilitate communication, particularly among the members of the Executive Committee and the people who are organizing national and regional meetings.

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them?

III. Officers and the Executive Committee

The following stipulations in the bylaws should be operative:

A. IIIA, "Officers." Past officers of the ACIS are welcome to consult and advise current officers. At one point in a conference call, reference was made to a "Council of Past Presidents." If such a committee exists and the Executive Committee wishes to work with it, its role and function must be specified in writing as part of the bylaws or "Guidelines" and, if necessary, approved by the membership.

Also, the stipulation of IIID, that "the Secretary and the Treasurer shall be appointed by the elected members of the Executive Committee," should be operating practice.

Similarly, the stipulation in IVF that "the Executive Committee is responsible for supervising ACIS elections" should be operating practice.

IV. Selection of Papers to be Presented at Meetings

In order to upgrade the quality of papers presented at regional and national conferences, more than the titles of papers should be considered before papers are accepted to be a part of the program. At the very least, abstracts of the papers must be read and evaluated. For the national conferences, discipline representatives of the Executive Committee must read these abstracts and submit their recommendations at the scheduled Executive Committee meeting.

In order to limit the burden this would impose on the more populous disciplines, I would recommend that a committee of volunteer readers be asked to vet, anonymously, the papers submitted. Their work should be given recognition for inclusion on their c.v.'s. This practice would improve the collegiality and professionalism of the organization.

PROGRAM-POLICY PROCEDURES COMMITTEE REPORT

Nancy Curtin (chair), Elizabeth Cullingford, Gary Owens, James Doan, James MacKillop, Lucy McDiarmid, and Johann Norstedt were consulted in the formulation of these guidelines. This is the final, revised version of the report, as accepted unanimously by the Executive Committee on April 15th, 1998.

Introduction. The following guidelines for the construction and approval of programs for the national meetings of the ACIS have been requested from this committee by the president to be submitted for the approval of the executive board. The guidelines proposed below reflect first and foremost a clarification of past practice in recommending a flexible structure under which the host institution collaborates with discipline representatives in determining the content of the national conference program. In general, the guidelines continue to defer to the host institution in organization and logistics, as well as planning deadlines, while assuring the invaluable input of discipline representatives, elected by the membership in the expectation that they would be making such contributions to program planning. The recommendations themselves are based on the committee's consultations with former hosts of national conferences as well as on the responses of current members of the executive board to a working draft. In addition to this structure of cooperation between the conference host and ACIS representatives, the guidelines strive to assure maximum flexibility in the organization and procedures of the committee itself.

Constitution of the Program Committee. The program committee for the national conference will normally be announced at the business meeting of the preceding national conference. The president shall nominate with the approval of the executive board the program committee which should include 1) at least one but not more than two representatives from the host institution; 2) the past president; 3) at least three members of the executive board drawn from the discipline representatives; 4) either the president or the vice-president, who will serve on the committee in an ex-officio capacity.

Content of National Meetings. 1) Theme: the host institution may determine a theme for the conference (in consultation with the executive board) and will issue a call for papers. The theme might provide the organizing principle for plenary sessions and other highlighted conference events, but the call for papers should clearly indicate that papers and panels on all aspects of Irish Studies will be welcome and given due consideration on their merits alone. 2) Plenary Speakers: the host institution may suggest the plenary speakers in consultation with the program committee. All the plenary speakers should not be bound to address the theme of the conference, but at least one of them should. It is desirable as well that the range of plenary sessions should take into account the broad diversity in disciplinary and theoretical interests of ACIS members. 3) Size of Conference: the host institution should determine (again in consultation with the program committee) the optimum number of sessions and participants in the conference, as well as the social events associated with the conference. We would urge some flexibility in the planning, for the number of sessions might happily be decreased or increased depending on the quality of proposals offered to the conference. It should also be understood that all members of the committee will be inclined to defer to the preferences of the host institution in matters relating to logistics and space requirements for sessions. 4) Conference format: the host institution should determine (in consultation with the program committee) the format of the conference, keeping in mind certain guidelines: a) the traditional format of three to four panelists should allow each panelist an opportunity to speak for at least 20 minutes, and allow at least 20 minutes of discussion at the conclusion of papers; b) the number of participants in roundtable discussions shall be determined by the panel organizer; c) host institutions are encouraged to pursue the Living Book Review format as a means of bringing the membership together for interdisciplinary dialogue. With that in mind, the books selected and the reviewers chosen should address issues across the disciplines; d) host institutions are also encouraged to make provision for plenary and semi-plenary sessions addressing professional and institutional issues facing Irish Studies in general — for examples, roundtables on publishing, teaching, employment, etc.; e) innovation and experimentation in format are always to be welcomed.

Participation Guidelines. 1) All participants must be members of ACIS. 2) Individual participation is limited to only one slot on the program. The program committee might allow exceptions to this rule in such cases where it is deemed that the overall quality of the program is enhanced (for instance, when the individual makes a unique contribution as chair of a particular session or as a participant in a roundtable discussion).

Review of Conference Proposals. 1) Proposal format: a) individual proposals should consist of a one-page abstract (no more than 250 words) highlighting the argument and methodology of the paper. b) panel proposals should consist of a cover letter explaining the theme of the session and role of each panelist in elucidating that theme, along with one-page abstracts (no more than 250 words) from all the proposed participants. In the case of roundtable proposals, abstracts from each participant are not required. 2) Call for papers: the host institution shall issue the call for papers (in advance of the constitution of the program committee), and all proposals should be sent to the host institution, its representative(s) functioning as the facilitator of the program committee. 3) Deliberations of the Program Committee: a) no earlier than one week after the deadline for proposals, all submissions (including the tardy ones) will be sent to all members of the program committee. It is to be assumed that proposals will thus be vetted across the disciplines, in order to encourage interdisciplinary dialogue and exchange. The program committee should also be encouraged to avail itself of the expertise of anyone on the executive board in determining the merits of any proposal. b) the program committee will determine well in advance of the proposal deadline how it wishes to organize itself and proceed with its collective deliberations. Members could, for example, engage in discussion in cyberspace; or they might choose to convene at one of the fall regional meetings. c) the host institution will determine the deadline for the completion of the program and the notification of participants. The committee is encouraged to make a final draft available to the entire board of the ACIS for review, but the ruling of the committee itself on any suggestions or revisions shall be final.

FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Readers will notice that this issue of the ACIS Newsletter contains a number of lengthy and non-routine items, notably the MacKillop-Thuente report and the report on policies and procedures. Also, as Vice-president Curtin notes in her statement on page two, there has been an ongoing dispute concerning the circumstances of her election and the procedural and constitutional steps to resolving these controversies.

I believe strongly that the majority of members look to the *Newsletter* only for short, useful information about goings-on in their discipline. However, the ACIS Executive Committee did not accede to my request that the extraordinary items in this issue be sent in a separate mailing. Hence, this exceptionally long issue.

In the interests of accurate reporting, I wish to note the circumstances that gave rise to this anomalous *Newsletter*. For the last several months, the Midwest and New England representatives have been calling into question procedures concerning the Curtin election, the rejection of conference papers at the Fort Lauderdale meeting, and the way that the ad hoc Committee on Mission and Purposes was elected. They have sent letters describing their concerns to their constituencies. These members of the Executive Committee continue to argue that, to avoid a constitutional crisis, the vice-president must first resign in order to run for president in the fall. They have rejected the findings of MacKillop-Thuente report and have raised questions concerning conflict of interest on the part of its authors. They have also argued that the ad hoc committee was improperly elected.

I sincerely hope that this will be the last such "irregular" issue I will edit. The deadline for items to be considered for the next issue is Nov. 11.

Jim Rogers, editor

Roanoke '99: Conference Committee

Chair:

Johann Norstedt, Virginia Tech
(host)

Local Committee:

Robert Brinlee, Virginia Tech
(technical coordinator)
Marilyn Norstedt, Virginia Tech
(book exhibit)

Academic Program:

Richard Bizot, ACIS
(Irish writing, arts)
Joe Eska, Virginia Tech
(Old Irish & linguistics)
Gary Owens, ACIS (history)
Andrew Wilson, ACIS
(social sciences)

ACIS Support:

James MacKillop, ACIS
Lucy McDiarmid, ACIS (ex officio)

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