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Agricultural
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Western Region
Committee Report

Committee: Program Improvement

Date of Meeting: September 15, 2022, 2:30 PM MDT

Members Present:

Member Name	Roll-off Year	Email
Julie Harlin	2022	j-harlin@tamu.edu
Shannon Norris-Parish	2023	norriss@nmsu.edu
Ryan Anderson	2023	r_a461@txstate.edu
Jessica Toombs	2024	jmtoombs@csuchico.edu
Theresa Murphrey	2024	t-murphrey@tamu.edu

Others Present:
❑ N/A

Minutes:

1. Shannon Norris-Parish opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance.

2. Shannon Norris-Parish began by sharing the 2021 meeting minutes with the group.
    a. Ryan Anderson identified the following errors in the roll-off term limits of Ryan Anderson (updated from 2023 to 2024); Jessica Toombs (updated from 2023 to 2024); Shannon Norris-Parish from (2022 to 2023); and Avery Culbertson (from 2021 to 2022). Jessica Toombs also recognized Avery Culbertson's email address was listed incorrectly.
    b. Following the revisions, Theresa Murphrey moved to approve the minutes and Ryan Anderson seconded.
    c. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business (agenda item listed in **bold**):

1. **Identify judges for the WR-AAAE poster and paper presentations.**
    a. Shannon Norris-Parish called Theresa Murphrey to provide an update on the poster process for the conference. Theresa Murphrey noted that she will email Shannon Norris-Parish the paper ballots for the "people's choice" award voting for posters. Shannon Norris-Parish will print, cut, and place two different colored paper slips (one for research and one for innovative posters) in the conference attendees' name tags.
    b. Theresa Murphrey mentioned that she will forward the poster designs to Ryan Anderson, Jessica Toombes, and Shannon Norris-Parish to judge the designs for attractiveness and visual appeal prior to the start of the conference.
    c. Theresa Murphrey will then print and bring certificates for the different poster awards.
    d. Shannon Norris-Parish will work with WR-AAAE research committee to identify paper presentation judges.

2. **Discuss revised conference approach based on last year's suggestions.**
   a. Shannon Norris-Parish provided an update on where the conference planning committee worked in suggestions from the 2021 Program Improvement Committee. Discussion included:
      i. Keeping the poster sessions with breakfast and leaving the posters up beyond the poster session so attendees may view the posters throughout the day.
      ii. Working with the Professional Development Committee to coordinate additional graduate student programming efforts in the conference. In 2023, the PD Committee will meet with the graduate students on Monday evening prior to the "Taste of New Mexico" reception to discuss strategies for how to best "conference." The PD committee will also host a wrap-up engagement session with the graduate students and PD committee members during the committee meetings on Tuesday.
      iii. Shannon Norris-Parish attended multiple PD committee meetings over the summer to work their PD efforts into the 2022 conference schedule.

New Business (agenda item listed in **bold**):

1. **Identify individuals to nominate to serve on the committee next year.**
   a. Dr. Murphey recommended Dr. Harlin. Dr. Harlin accepted, but also stated she was willing to allow her role to another faculty member if they were interested.
   b. Dr. Anderson recommended Dr. Eryn Pierdolla from Texas State University.

2. **Identify opportunities for programmatic improvements at the 2023 conference.**
   a. Committee members engaged in a dialog brainstorming programmatic improvement ideas for the 2023 conference. Discussion included:
      i. Theresa Murphrey suggested incorporating a "how to conference" guide prior to the start of the conference. She learned about this concept from a different NSF project, but the principles could be relevant to WR-AAAE attendees. She also recommended looking into some preliminary data she has from different professionals in the discipline about the needs/strategies behind effective "conferencing."
      ii. Shannon Norris-Parish discussed continuing to collaborate with the Professional Development and maybe considering designing a one-page "how to guide" to share with graduate students (idealy) prior to the 2023 WR-AAAE conference so they may learn of tips and tricks prior to arriving.
      iii. Dr. Harlin mentioned investigating a resource for people designing posters (based on a NIH project) that involves more visually appealing elements, photos, QR codes that allow scanning to a paper, etc.
      iv. Theresa Murphrey recommended conducting an analysis of poster authors to investigate who is applying/getting accepted with the goal of elevating the writing skills of WR-AAAE members who submit and still get rejected.
      v. Julie Harlin mentioned discussing a need to investigate inclusivity in poster acceptance. Does not want to use the language of "limited submission" but the committee may want to consider how WR-AAAE prepares individuals to submit abstracts and professional development submissions.
      vi. Jessica Toombes suggested investing repeated research questions and/or objectives of different studies rather than repeat submitters to address self-plagiarism laterally across the discipline.

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vii. Ryan Anderson recommended considering moving the WR-AAAE abstract submission process to a 5-page abstract for papers and posters. Reviewers could select relevancy as a paper, poster, or rejected rather than having two submission processes (similar to North Central's AAAE submission process).

b. Committee will bring additional ideas and solutions to the WR-AAAE conference committee meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 20.

3. **Adjournment:**
   a. Ryan Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting and Julie Harlin seconded.
   b. Motion passed unanimously.