

American Mathematical Society

Committee on Publications 2016 Annual Meeting SUMMARY REPORT

The annual meeting of the AMS Committee on Publications (CPub) was held on Friday and Saturday, September 16-17, 2016 in Providence, RI. CPub Chair Anatoly Libgober presided over the meeting.

Old Business - Updates on Actions

- **Approval of 2015 Minutes**

The minutes of the 2015 CPub meeting were approved as drafted.

- **2015 Annual Report**

CPub's 2015 annual report has been filed in the AMS Committee Report Book as Committee Report Number 151116-009 and posted on the Committee's homepage at <http://www.ams.org/ams/cpub-home.html>.

- **Actions Taken on CPub Recommendations**

Actions taken on CPub recommendations made in 2014 and 2015 include the following:

- CPub's 2014 recommendation that "*The AMS should increase the capacity of its research journals in order to better serve the mathematical community*" was considered as part of the larger Strategic Plan initiative to "Publish More Mathematics Content" as the discussion topic at the April 2016 Council meeting.
- CPub's 2015 recommendation to take over publication of the *Online Journal of Analytic Combinatorics* was rejected by the January 2016 Council.
- CPub's 2015 recommendation to discontinue the translation journal [*Theory of Probability and Mathematical Statistics*](#) was rejected by the November 2015 Executive Committee and Board of Trustees and the January 2016 Council.

- **Computational Reproducibility Guidelines for Mathematics**

In 2015, a joint subcommittee consisting of two members each from CPub and the AMS Committee on the Profession (CoProf) was formed to consider what role, if any, the AMS should have in the creation of guidelines for computational reproducibility standards for the mathematical community. The subcommittee recommended the following guidelines, which were approved by both CPub and CoProf:

As with all proofs in mathematics, computer-assisted proofs should be presented in enough detail for experts to validate them. Independent researchers should be able to examine all relevant calculations. Although each specific research community must and should decide its own standards, generally useful practices include giving complete descriptions of algorithms, and assuring access to software. When less standard packages or custom-written programs are used, it may be important to provide source code. Just as with the written text of papers, it is important to consider long-term stability of repositories and appropriate placement. For example, code can

be attached to an arXiv submission or included in the online version of the journal where the paper is published.

The title approved by CPub for the guidelines, “Guidelines for Communicating Computer-Assisted Proofs,” was later revised by CoProf to “Guidelines for the Submission, Refereeing and Publication of Computer-Assisted Proofs.” The CPub-CoProf approved Guidelines will be included in the January 2017 Council agenda for approval.

Reports

- **Report on Journal Backlogs**

CPub received the following reports by attachment: “Status of Backlog Reduction Plan,” “Journal Statistics Report,” and “Backlog of Mathematics Research Journals.” Robert Harington reviewed current primary journal statistics including publication, submission, and backlog data and provided an update on the status of the backlog reduction plan which was initiated in 2014 with the goal of reducing the backlogs of AMS’s primary journals to “zero” (i.e., a four-month in-house backlog).

- **Report on AMS Open Access Journals**

CPub received the reports “Status of Open Access Journals” and “Open Access Journal Statistics” by attachment, and Robert Harington reported on the status of the two electronic-only, open-access journals, [*Proceedings of the American Mathematical Society, Series B*](#) and [*Transactions of the American Mathematical Society, Series B*](#).

- **Report on Mathematical Reviews**

CPub received “Report on *Mathematical Reviews* to CPub” by attachment, which was presented by Executive Editor Edward Dunne.

New Business

- **AMS Publishing Strategic Plan and Journal Business Models**

Associate Executive Director, Publishing, Robert Harington presented a summary of the key initiatives of the AMS Strategic Plan for Publishing and lead discussion on possible new publishing models for AMS journals. The Committee discussed the feasibility of several potential options for new AMS journal publishing models as outlined in Robert Harington’s May 5, 2016 white paper “Journal Business Models for the AMS.”

After the meeting, a revised version of the “Journal Business Models for the AMS” white paper was prepared to incorporate the input offered during CPub’s discussion. Members of CPub were then asked to vote on whether or not they were in favor of endorsing the proposed new journal models as described in the revised white paper. The potential new models were endorsed by CPub by majority vote, and as part of the vote, comments were also solicited and received. CPub’s endorsement of the new models and the comments submitted will go forward to the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees for discussion at for its November 2016 meeting.

- **Revisions to Editorial Committee Charges**

- **Mathematics of Computation (MCOM) Editorial Committee Charge**

Secretary Carla Savage and MCOM Managing Editor Susanne Brenner informed CPub that since book reviews in the area of computational mathematics are now covered by [Bulletin of the AMS](#) and are no longer published in [Mathematics of Computation](#), a change to the MCOM Editorial Committee charge is needed. CPub endorsed revising “Principal Activities” item 4 of the MCOM Editorial Committee charge to delete language regarding receiving and soliciting books for review in the “Reviews” section of the journal. The proposed revisions to the charge will be included in the January 2017 Council agenda for approval.

- **Notices Editorial Board Charge**

Secretary Carla Savage suggested revisions to the Notices Editorial Board charge to define the term of the Chief Editor and to make current policy on member terms more explicit. CPub endorsed the suggested revisions to the “General Description” section of the charge, which will be included in the January 2017 Council agenda for approval.

- **Review of AMS Book Program**

CPub received the “2016 Report of the Subcommittee Reviewing the AMS Book Program” by attachment, which was presented by Anatoly Libgober, chair of the CPub subcommittee that conducted the 2016 review. Other subcommittee members included: Henry Cohn, Michael Larsen, Karen Vogtmann, and Ben Webster.

The subcommittee’s review focused on assessing the following aspects of the Book Program:

1. How do AMS membership, editors of the series, and the authors of books published by AMS assess the scientific quality of AMS book program?
2. How does AMS membership view the scope of the program in terms of the areas covered?
3. How do authors view AMS in comparison with other publishers?
4. How successfully does the AMS book program adapt to the changes in the book publishing industry?

The general findings of the subcommittee’s review indicate that the AMS is achieving its main goals of publishing books of high scientific quality, adequately representing all areas of mathematics, and providing valuable support to authors. The subcommittee recommended further review of possible new modes of accessibility and usage for books published in electronic format.

The Committee moved to accept the report with thanks and to appoint a subcommittee of CPub to make recommendations on “adopting new media for AMS books” to report to CPub at its 2017 meeting. The subcommittee’s membership and charge are to be determined after February 1, 2017, once the 2017 committee is seated.

- **TAMS Editorial Committee Restructuring**

In 2014, a “backlog reduction plan” aimed at reducing the backlogs of AMS’s primary journals to “zero” (i.e., a four-month in-house backlog) became a priority. As part of this plan, and to

improve the overall functioning of the journal's editorial processes, the Publisher and Associate Executive Director, Publishing presented a proposal to modify the current structure of the [Transactions and Memoirs of the AMS Editorial Committee](#) to add Coordinating Editors.

CPub approved the proposal and moved to recommend to Council that the charge to the TAMS Editorial Committee be revised to indicate the composition of the committee as consisting of the Managing Editor, five Coordinating Editors, and about fifteen Editors.

CPub's recommendation has been forwarded to the Editorial Boards Committee for comment and will be included in the January 2017 Council agenda for approval.

- **Procedures for New Journal Proposals**

A call for formal procedures for handling new journal proposals was made at the November 2015 Executive Committee and Board of Trustees (ECBT) meeting in connection with the discussion of the *Online Journal of Analytic Combinatorics* (item 2E.3 of those minutes). It was suggested that the procedures would include such things as instructions for submitting a proposal, how these instructions will be promulgated, how proposals will be vetted by staff, and what the governance protocol will be for getting a proposal approved by the Council and the Board of Trustees.

The Committee received and discussed the "Proposed Procedures for New Journal Proposals," as prepared by AMS Publisher Sergei Gelfand, for the submission, evaluation and approval of proposals to publish new journals. CPub approved an amended version of the procedures which will go forward to the ECBT and Council for further consideration.

- **Institutional Open Access Policies**

CPub Member Ilya Kapovich presented a brief history and overview of institutional open access policies as they relate to authors', publishers', funding agencies', and schools' rights for faculty-authored scholarly articles and proposed that AMS consider launching a public campaign aimed at heightening awareness of institutional open access policies.

Time constraints did not allow for full discussion of this item during the meeting, and the matter was referred to the AMS Committee on the Profession (CoProf) by Publisher Sergei Gelfand for consideration jointly with CPub.

CoProf endorsed the establishment of a joint subcommittee of CPub and CoProf to further consider the matter and drafted the following charge:

Many institutions and funding agencies have copyright and open access policies that affect mathematicians. This committee is charged with:

- **studying a sampling of such policies,**
- **determining whether there is a need to raise mathematicians' awareness about the existence of these policies,**
- **determining whether there is a need for guidelines for mathematicians to deal with these issues,**
- **determining whether the AMS is an appropriate body to create such guidelines; and**

- **if the answer to the previous question is positive, considering what further steps should be taken.**

Following the meeting, CPub conducted an online vote and approved the formation of the joint CPub-CoProf subcommittee as charged. CPub members Ilya Kapovich and Henry Cohn have volunteered to serve on behalf of CPub, and Alicia Dickenstein and John McCleary have volunteered to serve on behalf of CoProf. A chair will be selected upon mutual agreement of the CPub and CoProf chairs.

Informational Items/Other Business

- **2017 CPub Meeting**

The next CPub meeting will be held *Friday and Saturday, October 13-14, 2017* at the Chicago Hilton O'Hare in Chicago, IL.

- **2017 CPub Review**

An evaluation of the AMS Member Journals (*Bulletin, Notices* and *Abstracts*) will be conducted and presented at the 2017 meeting.

Sergei Gelfand
Publisher
October 25, 2016