

August 23, 2019, GEM Steering Committee Minutes (virtual meeting, conducted via Zoom)

Attendance – Paul Cassak (Chair), Vania Jordanova (Vice Chair), Allison Jaynes, Adam Kellerman, Matthew Cooper, Agnit Mukhopadhyay, Steve Petrinec, Brian Walsh, Matina Gkioulidou, Chih-Ping Wang, Seth Claudepierre (scribe), Raluca Ilie, Shin Ohtani, Hyunju Connor, John Lyon, Chris Mouikis, Joe Borovsky, Lisa Winter

1. Welcome/Agenda [Paul Cassak]
2. New SC member selection [Paul Cassak]
 - a. Vania Jordanova was selected as Vice-Chair at the second Steering Committee (SC) meeting at the 2019 GEM Workshop. At that time, Vania was an At-large SC member, so a new At-large member must be selected.
 - b. At-large (1 position open) – Discussion of the six candidates
 - c. Vote is held.
 - d. Lynn Kistler is selected.
3. Language about students leading FG's [Paul Cassak]
 - a. There are two issues to address: (1) lack of direction about whether grad students are allowed to chair a FG and (2) a lack of stated criteria for how we choose successful focus group proposals.
 - b. A draft of potential modifications to the guidelines for focus group proposals, based off the discussion we had at the last GEM SC meeting, was discussed.
 - c. Since this material is part of the GEM by-laws, voting is required to make any changes.
 - d. There was also a suggestion to reduce the term limit of FGs to 4 years instead of 5.
 - e. Discussion (whether graduate students can lead FGs).
 - i. A suggestion was made that the PhD advisor not be the FG leader who mentors the grad student
 - ii. Would we require that the student's advisor approves? It could cause friction between PhD students and their advisors. This might be a huge time sink that advisors wouldn't be happy about.
 - iii. There was concern that this might invoke competition between students. Will this lead to many students wanting to be a FG leader?
 - iv. There was concern about limiting students from being a FG leader; maybe there is or will be one that is appropriate for the position.
 - v. If we go forward with allowing, maybe we shouldn't put so many criteria on it.
 - vi. We have an obligation to educate students. We should not be setting unrealistic expectations.

- vii. Student reps were asked their opinions.
- viii. We could start a new option for one-off (one year) niche sessions that students would be able to lead.
- ix. The drafted criteria/statements are inconsistent. We say the students are judged on the same criteria but then just below that we list all these additional criteria that students are judged on.
- x. Before we vote as a SC should we ask the broader community? It was decided that we should not. We can get feedback from the community after having a policy in place for the upcoming FG proposal season.
- xi. A motion was raised and seconded to vote on student issue (yes – allow students to participate as FG leaders, but without endorsement; no – disallow).
- f. Voting (students)
 - i. Two voting members are not present. Since they did not participate in the conversation and were already asked for their votes via email before the meeting, their votes are not going to be solicited.
 - ii. Motion fails. We will not allow graduate students to participate as FG leaders. It will be added to by-laws.
- g. Discussion (FG proposal evaluation criteria & reducing to 4 years)
 - i. SC was generally in favor of the proposed criteria.
 - ii. Should we rank the criteria, in terms of what is most important? Decided against.
 - iii. It was noted that most focus groups propose a duration of 5 years, despite it being open in terms of length. Suggestion was made that more emphasis be placed on the justification provided for length of term.
 - iv. If we reduce to 4 years, we have the potential to get more fresh ideas.
 - v. Should we require that proposals discuss how they are building on previous FG? It was decided that this should probably not be added to not penalize new ideas not related to previous FGs.
 - vi. Motion was raised and seconded to vote on the FG evaluation criteria.
- h. Voting (FG criteria; Y = accept criteria as stated, N = do not provide criteria)
 - i. Motion passes.
- i. Continued discussion on the term lengths.
 - i. Should we make it 4 years, with possible 1 year “no-cost extension”?
 - ii. Motion was raised and seconded to vote on the FG term length. Three options: (a) = 4 years, with 1 year NCE, (b) = 5 year, (c) = 4 year
- j. Voting
 - i. Motion passes to change FG term limit to 4 years with the option to request a fifth year. By-laws will need to be changed. Development of 1 year NCE criteria will be handled at a later time through email. One point is to make clear in the announcement and by-laws is that the default is now 4 years, not 5.

4. New UK Liaison discussion [Paul Cassak]

- a. A group from the UK (MIST) has asked to be added as a GEM liaison and submitted a brief statement of interest/CV of their proposed liaison, Thomas Elsdon.
 - b. Discussion on whether to have them join our list of liaisons.
 - i. SC generally in favor of proposal. MIST is an active community related to what GEM does. Tom is a good candidate. It would be good to have more participation from this group at GEM.
 - ii. It was noted that some liaisons are more active than others. What is the role that a liaison serves? It is not formally laid out. De facto role is that they give reports in GEMStone.
 - iii. Motion was raised and seconded to accept this proposal.
 - c. Voting (Y = add; N = do not add)
 - i. Proposal accepted.
5. Anti-harassment, subcommittee [Paul Cassak]
- a. A proposed update to the Anti-Harassment policy document was presented
 - b. Paul Cassak's Title IX office reviewed the proposed edits and they suggested two things to change: (1) Include "interim measures", i.e., things that we can do or that the accuser/accused might need during the time the investigation is going on; (2) Ensure that the ad hoc committee to investigate a report has the appropriate training to do investigations.
 - c. A third change was proposed: (3) Add a paragraph explicitly giving our meeting organizers the ability to address an issue where a Title IX complaint is filed against someone at their home institution (i.e., unknown to GEM), and the accused and accuser both attend GEM (can cause stress for the accuser/accused).
 - d. Discussion
 - i. How do we enforce the colocation thing, between the accused and accuser? How do the mechanics of this work? The meeting organizer would presumably handle this (i.e., ensure that they are not in the same sessions). No matter what we decide, UNH will have to approve. It's our responsibility to ensure everyone is comfortable at the meeting.
 - ii. How will anonymous reporting be achieved in practice? Can we have an option to fill out a form on a website/wiki? How anonymous would that be? If it is written and submitted from the hotel business center, it would effectively be anonymous. Will pursue this.
 - iii. Mention of conflict with MCV is vague. Clarified: It means if the accuser has a conflict/issue with someone on the MCV. The accuser should report a conflict with the MCV or other SC members. Suggested that when the accuser makes an accusation, they can say if they have conflict with any SC members. That should cover it.
 - iv. Should the members of the standing subcommittee be made public? No.

- v. Motion and second to accept the proposed with modifications for the discussed changes to the anti-harassment document (Y = approve document with changes discussed, N = disapprove)
 - e. Voting
 - i. Motion passes.
6. SC-member terms [Paul Cassak]
- a. The way the SC-terms are currently configured/staggered, 5 RACs, 1 At-Large SC member, and the Meeting Coordinator all rotate off the SC at the same time (sometimes more if Chair/Vice-Chair rotate off at the same time)
 - b. Are we content with a schedule in which >7 (of 18) regular SC members rotate off at one time, or do we prefer turnover to be more distributed?
 - c. If the desire is more distributed, then there are two issues: (1) whether to offset terms to even out when people rotate off instead of having half the SC change at once or whether to keep it as is, and (2) whether to change the terms of RACs and At-Large members or keep them as is. One idea of changing them was to make them 4 years each (instead of 6 for RACs and 3 for At-Large).
 - d. Discussion
 - i. Most are generally in favor of changing it to more distributed.
 - ii. It was generally agreed that RAC term of 6 years is too long. Research directions might change; institutional commitments might change; RACs may be less energetic in the later years.
 - iii. Discussion of whether to increase at-large term length from 3 to 4 years.
 - iv. Motion raised and seconded to vote on: (a) keep as is, (b) stagger, but keep term limits at 6/3 years, (c) stagger and change to 4/4 years
 - e. Voting
 - i. Motion is to change term limits to 4 and 4 years for RAC and At-large. Will need to change by-laws. Will need to work with RACs to determine who will rotate off early (some will need to rotate off two years early, others one).
7. GEM Communications Coordination (website/wiki, Messenger, GEM Stone) [Paul Cassak]
- a. Peter Chi's term as Communications Coordinator ended on 7/31/19, so there will be a change to how GEM coordinates communications
 - b. At-large member Adam Kellerman volunteered to take over interim maintenance of the website/wiki, which was migrated to a new website hosted at UCLA/EPSS.
 - i. Do we want one SC member to run the wiki? Or fold it into the Meeting Organizer?
 - c. Where/how should GEM Messenger run?
 - i. Suggestion was that we prefer the approach Peter has taken of collecting a handful of announcements before sending with a cadence of a week or two to the approaches by other similar organizations.

- ii. Adam says that UCLA IGPP hosting the Messenger listserv should be stable for a while and might not need to be transitioned in the near term.
 - d. GEMstone: We currently have no plans. No one is running it. If we keep it, who runs it?
 - i. SHINE does not do this kind of summary, and CEDAR used to but stopped.
 - ii. Poll the community to see if they find it useful?
 - iii. Where do liaisons report if it goes away entirely? We should focus less on that and instead find a better way to engage with the liaisons.
 - e. Very brief discussion on all the above points, due to end of meeting. Tabled for later.
- 8. Discussion items tabled until next time:
 - a. RAC Roles (i.e., Bill Lotko white paper)
 - b. 2020 Meeting planning updates? Subcommittee of 3 people for Joint SHINE meeting planning?
 - c. NSF Funding Rate policy discussion
- 9. Meeting adjourned