Argumentation and Forensics Division

Business Meeting

Southern States Communication Association – Frisco, TX

Friday April 5th, 2024 – 4:15 pm – Room BUSH

1. Mik Davis called the meeting to order at 4:23 pm
   1. Like all tournaments we are missing many people and running slightly behind
   2. Mik filled in for Mike Gray, who could not be at the business meeting because he was filling in for someone at the State Associations business meeting
      1. It is of note that this year’s conference had many division and interest group business meetings running concurrently. Low attendance at business meetings and having officers fill in for each other was thus not isolated phenomenon for AFD. This appears to be a result of several idiosyncrasies of the venue and the scheduling of other program entries rather than an oversight on the part of the program planner.
2. Roll Call:
   1. Cole Franklin
   2. Brian Lain
   3. Kevin Bryant
   4. Mik Davis
   5. Ryan Goke
3. Approval of 2023 minutes
   1. Kevin motions to approve
      1. Ryan seconds
4. Officer Reports:
   1. Chair: Mike Gray – absent
      1. Kevin Bryant delivered a recap of the Executive Council meetings on Mike’s behalf and, with Mik, delivered other notes for the chair report which will be detailed in subsequent sections.
   2. Vice Chair: Mik Davis (acting chair for this meeting)
      1. Use of allocated panel slots was sufficient given historical standards. We anticipate that next year we will receive a similar allocation as this year. Thank you to our submitters and reviewers, and congratulations to Brian Lain for receiving the Top Paper Award.
      2. It is of particular note that our Town Hall Debate, a tradition for AFD, was recognized as a Presidential Spotlight Panel this year. We would like to thank Ann Burnette for that designation. We would also like to express our gratitude to the members of the Constitution Committee—Dave Nelson, Todd Lee Goen, and Nika Welch for being part of this special Town Hall Debate on the SSCA constitution and proposed amendments.
   3. Vice Chair Elect: Gabrielle Lamura – absent
      1. It is of note that Gabby could not attend this meeting because she was accepting an award elsewhere before traveling to Frisco for the latter part of SSCA. As usual, AFD members’ time is in high demand because they are so excellent! Congrats to Gabby on the award!
   4. Secretary: Robert Tabackman- absent
      1. Robert could not be present because of institutional commitments at the University of Georgia. There was no particular business to report on behalf of the secretary.
   5. Immediate Past Chair: Ryan Goke (filling in as secretary taking notes)
      1. Thank you, Ryan!
5. EC Report:
   1. Kevin Bryant (on behalf of Mike)
      1. We are going to Norfolk, VA in 2025
      2. We approved 12 amendments to the constitution in the business meeting
         1. Nakia Welch did fantastic work with his team
            1. You can find all the amendments in our SSCA podcast episode! (search the Southern COMMference Podcast on Apple, Spotify, or wherever you listen)
         2. The amendments largely focused on consistency and making the constitution *significantly* more readable for the members.
         3. The Katheryn Hendricks Instructional Development of the Year endowment award was passed at the NCA business meeting.
      3. Marketing Director and Strat Comm Director position will be split into two positions
      4. 2028 conference – Time & Place Committee has not secured a site yet
         1. They are considering Memphis
6. Old Business
   1. 8 convention entries with 7 submissions
   2. Awards and Honors:
      1. Brian Lain had a top paper award!
      2. Amorette Hindertaker is our recipient for the Forensics Educator/Contributor of the Year Award
         1. Exceptional record as a forensicator; just started her 2-year term as president of Pi Kappa Delta.
7. New Business
   1. Division numbers are up
      1. The division is showing great resilience and is climbing back toward pre-pandemic numbers (just 5 short of a recent high)
      2. Mik would like to see the submissions match the member numbers
         1. Our panel allocations are low because of our low submission rates – we only get slots based on the number of slots we have used historically, particularly in the prior year.
      3. More members in our division would be nice
         1. All divisions need 5% of total SSCA membership according to the post-convention numbers in order to retain divisional status
         2. AFD is not now and has not recently been at risk of falling below that 5% threshold. We are, according to Kevin, approximately middle of the pack in terms of division size.
         3. We continue to retain our good standing and size thanks to many lifetime members and sustaining members, who we thank for their dedication to AFD when we know they have many choices for divisional affiliation.
         4. That being said, we would still love to see more member activity in the form of submissions and business meeting attendance. See below under “2025 Convention” for our discussion regarding how to stimulate more member activity.
   2. Elections
      1. We have quorum based on our new bylaws to elect a Vice Chair for the 2026 convention.
      2. Brian Lane self-nominates for the position
         1. Brian was elected by acclimation. Congratulations Brian! We look forward to working with you!
      3. We do not need a Secretary election for 2024-2025 because Rob has another year of his two-year term per the new bylaws.
   3. 2025 Convention in Norfolk, VA
      1. Brainstorming with theme: “Anchors and Anchoring Communication”
         1. Kevin proposes an asynchronous option to help us compete with the national tournaments that inevitably takes place during/around SSCA.
            1. Have an entirely asynchronous panel – videos would be recorded and submitted
            2. “Anchors and the weights that prevent us from using the technology that’s available to us”
         2. It is of note that AFD is an ideal space for SSCA to explore expanding hybrid/asynchronous panels because our a substantial portion of our membership is not able to attend conference because they are traveling students to national tournaments.
            1. However, we did have a panel this year thanks to Brian Lane and colleagues that served as proof of concept for hybrid panels and their potential to include coaches/GTAs who cannot be physically present.
         3. Should we continue bringing undergrad students who are speech/debate competitors as panelists?
            1. Mik thinks this is particularly good and relevant when we use the champions in the state hosting SSCA because it is easier for them to get here and showcase
            2. It is also a good recruitment opportunity for undergraduates, particularly juniors, seeking GTA positions following graduation.
   4. Issue of the AFD budget:
      1. Bob Glenn was the treasurer this division for many years and he has retired.
         1. We have about $7,000 that must be either deposited into a new AFD account or otherwise managed by someone else.
      2. Kevin proposes is that we create an endowed award
         1. This fund could be used to help undergrad students get to SSCA for the UHC, our AFD performance panel, and the recruitment fair.
         2. This would be set up through SSCA so that people can also donate to this award to benefit our division
            1. It could follow the Hendricks endowed award structure, which would involve someone (usually the Chair) working with the Constitution Committee to prepare for the award to be voted on at the mid-year EC business meeting at NCA.
      3. Mik will work with the Constitutional Committee to get us set up with SSCA so that any donations to the award endowment would qualify as a 50C3 tax-deductible donation.
         1. Brian raised an excellent point that, to be successful, we need to find a way to collect secure donations on an on-going basis.
         2. This is additionally prescient considering that many AFD members who would be inclined to support the endowment are often not able to be physically present at conference and are extremely busy forensics coaches.
      4. Kevin raised that we send out this proposal to our AFD members to vote electronically.
         1. This plan is supported by all here
         2. Mik agrees to send out the ballot, which according to the new bylaws must by done by May 5, 30 days after the business meeting.
      5. Of note regarding the endowed award: We will also need to establish a committee to award the travel grant and manage its disposition to awardees
         1. Brian proposes a “Travel Grant Awarding Committee”
            1. Proposal is accepted by attendees.
            2. Electronic correspondence to solicit volunteers will be added to the above-mentioned ballot regarding funds.
         2. Ryan Goke will be the chair of the committee (as the interim treasurer)
            1. Volunteers for the committee will work with Ryan
   5. Outgoing Remarks by Mike Gray
      1. Mike appreciates everyone’s work on AFD this year and looks forward to transitioning into Immediate Past Chair.
   6. Signing up for reviewing – do it!! We need reviewers
      1. Gabby will be sending out information and asking for reviewers as the 2025 planning gets underway.
      2. Please consider volunteering as a reviewer. All divisions need reviewers always!
   7. Passing of the gavel
   8. Adjournment
      1. Cole Franklin moves to adjuourn
      2. Kevin seconds
      3. Dismissed at 5:32