

CACLALS Annual General Meeting

Monday June 3rd, 2019

University of British Columbia, BC

Meeting Convened at 5:30pm

Chaired by: Mariam Pirbhai, CACLALS President (2017-2019)

Present: Mariam Pirbhai, Hengameh Saroukhani, Jesse Arseneault, Sue Spearey, Susie O'Brien, Suhaan Mehta, Anna Guttman, Michael Minor, Sara Rozenberg, Shalika Sivathanan, J. Coplen Rose, Alessandra Capperdoni, Guy Beauregard, Jonathan Nash, Kirby Mania, Brianna Lebel, Connor Meeker, Margaret Boyce, Rubelise da Cunha, Cynthia Sugars, Ranjini Mendis, Asma Sayed

1. Call to order
2. Agenda: approved
 - (Anna Guttman/J. Coplen Rose)
3. Minutes of 2018 AGM approved by consensus with no corrections
4. President's Report (Mariam Pirbhai):
 - Mariam Pirbhai began by thanking everyone for their hardwork during this year's Congress, particularly the Executive committee and the Local Rep, Stephen Ney.
 - Mariam Pirbhai welcomed the three new or (re)newing members of the Executive: J. Coplen Rose (Atlantic), Terri Tomsy [for a renewing term] (Prairies), and Sara Rosenberg (Graduate).
 - Mariam Pirbhai noted that we had 110 submitted proposals this year, making this Congress one of the most successful for CACLALS. In this vein, she also noted that keeping the extended January deadline for proposal submissions has been a healthy change in the association as it allows members and potential members to submit after Christmas.
 - Mariam Pirbhai thanked our three keynotes (Jasbir Puar, David Chariandy, David Palumbo-Liu) and the generous support of our collaborators and sponsors: ACCUTE, CCLA, ILSA, *Ariel*, the Federation and UBC's Centre for Asian Studies.
 - Mariam Pirbhai thanked everyone for their input in expanding the CACLALS research field areas on our membership platform; indeed, the President noted that our membership numbers are extremely healthy and continue to replenish every year with new members across Canada and around the world. This year's conference, for example, included participants travelling from Martinique, Spain, Lithuania, Brazil, UK, USA, and India.
 - Mariam Pirbhai drew attention to the upcoming ACLALS 2019 conference "The Uncommon Commonwealth" (Auckland, July 15-19).
 - Mariam Pirbhai commented on the stunning growth in membership over last two years, remarking that dynamic conferences, with reputable speakers, international and national, as well as a strong website and social media presence, are essential

to continued growth. Last year the association membership increased approx. 30% from 60 to 85 members; this year we stand at about 160-180 members marking an additional 100% growth!

- The President concluded her report by suggesting that the next Executive revive CHIMO via a blog (as discussed at last year's AGM). CHIMO will be able to further galvanize and connect our growing association.

5. Treasurer's Report (Henghameh Saroukhani):

REVENUE:

- Henghameh Saroukhani confirmed the continued and very healthy renewal of members this year as we have seen an \$885 increase in membership revenue (although multi-year renewals are included in this number).
- The Treasurer noted that in October 2018 membership fees were increased with additional categories. The changes (discussed at the previous AGM) were as follows:
 - (a) Graduate Student, Sessional, Unwaged, Other \$30
 - (b) Post Doc \$35
 - (c) Full Time Contract Academic Faculty \$40
 - (d) Retired \$65
 - (e) Full-Time Tenured or Tenure Track \$75The previous fees were as follows: (a) Tenure / Tenure Track=\$60 (b) Student / Post Doc / Sessional=\$25
- Henghameh Saroukhani reiterated the importance of *Ariel's* generous support each year, as they contribute \$500 to our events. Their sponsorship and support is deeply appreciated. She encouraged members to consider *Ariel* for their upcoming articles.
- The Treasurer thanked those who have been donating as they renew their memberships; the donations will be held by CACLALS until ACLALS calls on us to use them for members or member associations that need extra support.
- In total, the revenue for CACLALS has increased by \$2650 which indicates we have a growing association. We do need to keep in mind that Vancouver is an attractive location (indeed UBC was the largest Congress yet). The next Executive will need to be mindful of this as they move forward.

DEBIT:

- While our revenue increased, so has our costs in terms of graduate funding, Executive travel, website upkeep and keynote costs. While the Treasurer noted how important it was to maintain the exciting keynote speakers for CACLALS, future Exec's should spend with care. In order to balance the budget, the Treasurer has recommended that Grad Funding be capped at \$2000 (instead of \$3000) and that no Executive travel should be claimed until the budget is back on track. She also noted that future Exec's should keep a watchful eye on Congress costs (a/v, catering etc. as these costs continue to increase beyond our revenue uptake)

- The Treasurer was pleased to announce that the Indigenous Language Revitalization Fund has been distributed to ILSA (\$525) for this year's roundtable.

TOTAL/CONCLUSION:

- The budget reflects an association that has been expanding (via a new website and with prominent keynote speakers). Indeed, our net total has improved by \$400. However, Henghameh Saroukhani urged fiscal responsibility. Focus will need to remain on ways to encourage more membership and reduce costs as much as possible (especially with catering, a/v and speakers). Consideration should be paid to funding from the Federation as well. Future Exec's must remember that funding is not guaranteed.
- Henghameh Saroukhani suggested that the account should not dip below \$10,000 and this might be a good way to ensure our association keeps busy while remaining fiscally attentive to our future.
- Henghameh Saroukhani finished her report by reminding members of our new sponsorship tab where they can support grad students and anyone who may need extra help coming to Congress (with thanks to Asma Sayed for this idea at last year's AGM).
- Henghameh Saroukhani ended her report by noted that it has been a pleasure to serve these past two years as Secretary-Treasurer.

6. General Business

- a. *CACLALS Name Change*: Mariam Pirbhai outlined the history of our association wanting to change our name. She distributed a draft letter to be presented at ACLALS 2019 (Auckland) by Henghameh Saroukhani (Secretary-Treasurer) and John Ball (Atlantic Rep). Members were asked to respond and give their views. Shalika Sivathanas noted that two her of friends did not apply to CACLALS this year because of the problematic name. Sue Spearey noted that the association name has been a long-standing issue with members. Anna Guttman was keen to hear how ACLALS colleagues would respond to the letter and noted that a change would most likely be welcome. Guy Beauregard suggested coordinating with other associations to create alliances around this issue. Susie O'Brien commended the letter and also signalled that it would be productive to collaborate with other associations in advance of ACLALS. She also suggested that the term 'literature' may be too restrictive. Michael Minor noted that the term Commonwealth was archaic. Other members agreed that other suggested names might be problematic as well; however, all agreed that some name change is crucial and must happen quickly. Ranjini Mendis noted that this conversation has been happening for over 10 years. A number of members expressed support for the suggestion to change the name even if ACLALS disagrees as it is having a negative impact on our association. Jeese Arenseault noted that some attention needs to be paid to the work of decolonization in the name. While

some members expressed concern over terms like ‘postcolonial’ and ‘anti-colonial’ there seemed to be a tentative consensus with the acronym CAPS: Canadian Association for Postcolonial Studies. It was agreed to see how ACLALS would respond to the President’s letter. This issue will be re-examined at next year’s AGM.

- b. *Restructuring CACLALS Executive*: Both Mariam Pirbhai and Hengameh Saroukhani stressed the importance of constitutionally changing the CACLALS Executive roles. Since the association is growing and increasing duties are falling on the top two positions, roles need to be more democratically distributed amongst the Executive. Mariam Pirbhai and Hengameh Saroukhani suggested the following positions for consideration: President, Vice-President (new), Treasurer, Executive Officer (instead of Secretary), Early Career Representative (new), Contract Academic Representative (new), Communications Officer (new) [this role would be for social media etc.], CHIMO Editor (new). The question of whether CACLALS still requires strict regional representation could also be broached. Changing the Executive by constitutional change is crucial and will require the next Executive to determine new roles in order to make changes for the next AGM. Since the top two positions were still vacant two nominations were made on the floor: Jesse Arseneault for Secretary-Treasurer (accepted) *NOTE: Ranjini Mendis mentioned that the position of ‘executive officer’ was already put into circulation in previous years. However, this title has not been maintained. If this position is to be kept, the next Executive must make this change via the constitution.*
- c. *CHIMO newsletter as Blog*: Mariam Pirbhai noted the importance of restarting the CHIMO newsletter. Our website has the capacity to construct a blog and would need dedicated members as editors. Members agreed that it is important to restart CHIMO.

7. Committee Vacancies/New Members: (all below positions were accepted with consensus or carried forward)

- Thanks were given to outgoing members Mariam Pirbhai, Hengameh Saroukhani, John Ball and Shamika Shabnam.
- Based on CACLALS elections a month prior and nominations on the floor, the incoming Executive is as follows:

Current Executive:

- President – [TBA] **note: this position was filled by Asma Sayed after the AGM**
- Secretary-Treasurer – Jesse Arseneault (Concordia) **new**
- Prairies – Terry Tomskey (UofA) **renewed**
- Atlantic – J. Coplen Rose (Acadia) **new**
- Ontario – TBA
- Quebec – Jesse Arseneault (Concordia)

- British Columbia and Northern Territories – Asma Sayed (KPU)
- Colleges – Alia Somani
- Graduate Student – Sara Rozenberg (York) [serving until 2021] **new**
- Graduate Student – Shalika Sivathasan (York) [serving until 2020]

8. Other Business:

- Guy Beauregard noted the increase in Congress Registration fees and wanted the Exec to convey to Congress how expensive this important conference has become. Both the President and Secretary-Treasurer made note of this (and indeed agreed with the general increase in costs), while reminding members to use the sponsorship option for those members who need extra support. Senior colleagues were encouraged to use this tab for graduate students and/or contract/sessional faculty alongside any funding they may also have (including SSHRC) as a means to support members.
- Both Mariam Pirbhai and Hengameh Saroukhani took a moment to thank each other and the Executive for a brilliant two-year term that has seen the association grow and change in exciting ways.

9. Motion to Adjourn by consensus (6:30pm)