

**Agenda: Liberal Education/Engineering & Society Business Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, June 15, 2015: 12:30–2:00 p.m.**  
**Washington Convention Center 240**  
**Seattle, WA**

2014–2015 Officers

Division Chair: Atsushi Akera, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Division Chair-Elect: Steven H. VanderLeest, Calvin College  
Past Chair: Judith Norback, Georgia Tech  
Program Chair: Dean Nieuwsma, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Program Chair-Elect: John Brocato, Mississippi State University  
Outgoing Secretary/Treasurer: Erin Cech, Rice University  
Incoming Secretary/Treasurer: Genine Apidone, Case Western  
Webmaster & Newsletter Editor: Justin Hess, Purdue University

## 1. Introductions

Atsushi called the meeting to order and asked all attendees to introduce themselves and to suggest one challenge to integrating LEES-related topics and issues into engineering education.

## 2. Report from PIC III Chair (Sheryl Sorby, Ohio State)

Sheryl reported on the place of our division in PIC III and the financial health of ASEE as a whole.

### ***Division and PIC III information:***

- As a recap, there are 5 PICs, and each division reports to a PIC chair. Our PIC has 13 divisions, with the theme of “foundational subjects.”
- If changing bylaws, need to get them in by November 1<sup>st</sup>, in order for them to be acted upon in January. Otherwise, they will not be acted upon until June.
- Sheryl suggested that we consider an online voting option for our division, which we already have in place.
- Our division has proposed and been awarded monies through the PIC Special Project Fund. These are usually a maximum of \$500, and divisions are expected to match funds.
  - However, the CFO discourages splitting PIC Special Project Funds across divisions, as it makes accounting and disbursements complicated.
- LEES was very successful in ASEE-wide paper competitions this year:
  - Best PIC III paper, which then became the ASEE Best Paper
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Best Diversity Paper

### ***ASEE-Wide Changes and Information:***

- Changes from last year:
  - Eliminated the “paper fees”
  - Negotiated a “reasonable wifi fee” with the convention center
  - Monolith now makes it much easier for divisions to co-sponsor sessions
- Plans for a Preschool-12<sup>th</sup> Grade “Year of Action,” likely the following year or the year after that.
- Hosted a “Strategic Doing and Listening Session” to allow members to voice their perspective on the future direction of ASEE and how to break down barriers to communication across divisions.
- Membership and conference fees have increased. There are ways to reduce the fees on a yearly basis, including a multi-year renewal or a lifetime membership.

- Sheryl discussed the past and current financial health of ASEE, noting that the society faced financial struggles in the recent past due to accounting and personnel complications, and voted this year to have a balanced budget for 2014-2015. The required revenue generation came from increasing the costs of institutional membership and cost-cutting measures, mostly at headquarters. [Note: specific financial figures and detailed information about the financial struggles provided at the meeting have been redacted.]
- Key accounting change: going forward, all incoming money into the BASS accounts will be assessed a 30% administration fee to cover overhead. This will *not* be assessed on expenditures (as had previously been communicated to division treasurers). This fee may decrease in the coming years, but will likely not increase.

**LEES Comments for PIC Chair:**

- Business meeting members thanked Sheryl for the transparency of ASEE in these financial matters.
- The suggestion was offered that, instead of focusing attention and resources on a number of initiatives at once, that ASEE focus on fewer initiatives and put more time and attention behind them.

**3. Approval of 2014 Minutes**

Minutes of 2014 LEES business meeting were distributed to division members beforehand and approved at the meeting.

**4. Division Chair's Report: Atsushi Akera**

Atsushi began by thanking Dean for a strong program this year and noted that LEES has become an active division, as measured by our collaboration with other divisions and the awards granted to division papers.

Atsushi discussed two efforts spearheaded by LEES members:

(1) *Response to recommendations of the Humanities Working Group from the 2014 Interdivisional Town Hall Meeting.* This was a group of engineers who expressed interest having humanities more integrated into engineering education, and in sessions at ASEE.

Their recommendations:

- (a) Embed more of LEES' work within the mainline divisions. As a first step towards this goal, Atsushi organized a "Society-Wide Session on Engineering and Liberal Arts Integration" that showcased some of the best efforts.
- (b) Make the varied E&LE integration initiatives more visible to all. This led to the "Engineering and Liberal Education Benchmarking Initiative." This initiative is an attempt to catalog what is happening in engineering and liberal education. LEES and Union College is collaborating on creating a Wordpress-based site for documenting all kinds of institutions, programs, courses, and extra-curricular activities that those in LEES and elsewhere are doing to achieve Engineering and the Liberal Arts. Organizers are seeking one-page descriptions that then can be put up on the website for beta testing. Atsushi will be sending around calls for information soon.

(2) *"Ad-hoc committee on interdivisional cooperation:"* the purpose of this committee is to make ASEE divisions less siloed and help advance broader conversations about cross-cutting issues. Each division sends a delegate to the Annual Town Hall meeting (34 divisions signed on this year). The topic for this year's meeting: nontraditional sessions on current topics in engineering education.

## **5. Election Appointment of 2015-2016**

Judith Norback, as past chair, described the procedures of election and nomination in LEES: Typically, we expect the Division Chair-Elect to move into the Division chair, the Program Chair to move into the Division Chair-Elect. Per these guidelines, Steve VanderLeest will move into the Division Chair position. The nominating committee made the following appointments for 2015-2016:

- Dean Nieuwma will become Division Chair-Elect
- John Brocato will become Program Chair
- Shane Cotter will become the Program Chair-Elect
- Genine Apidone will become the Secretary/Treasurer

## **6. Secretary/Treasurer's report**

Erin Cech provided the following report: We have two accounts: The BASS (Banking and Accounting Service System) account and an operating account. The division receives \$1/year from division fees. These funds are flexible and roll over from year to year. The division receives about \$1/per member in our Operating account, which has tighter restrictions, and zeros out at the end of each year. Based on accounting estimates, as of the business meeting we have approximately \$1795 in the BASS account and \$275 in the Operating account. I expect that there will be approximately \$1000 in the BASS account after all expenses for the 2015 meetings are paid. If you have receipts to be reimbursed, please scan and email them to me at [ecech@rice.edu](mailto:ecech@rice.edu), or send them via mail to: Erin Cech, Department of Sociology –MS28, Rice University, 6100 Main St., Houston, TX 77006.

## **7. Program Chair's Report for 2015 program**

Dean Nieuwma reported on the organization of this year's program. Overall, the program fell together easily with a good deal of co-sponsorship with other divisions. This co-sponsorship was facilitated by improvements made to monolith over the last year. This year's program has 10 total technical sessions, including 5 regular sessions and 5 "special" themed sessions that were organized by presenters. LEES members were encouraged to do this again for next year's program.

The division has seen growth in submissions and acceptances. Historically, LEES have recently averaged 49 abstract submissions and 27 papers. This year, we had 64 abstract submissions and 41 papers. We were able to have keep it to 4 papers per session in all but 2 sessions. While our growth is promising, we may run into space constraints in future programs.

## **8. Presentation of Awards**

Steve VanderLeest, chair of the awards committee, announced the following awards:

### ***Best Paper Awards***

Steve blinded all papers that were nominated for best paper or best diversity paper and forwarded them to the awards committee. The committee selected a best paper and best diversity paper of the division, and then Steve forwarded on these papers to the PIC level.

- Best Paper award: "Which Courses Influence Engineering Students' Views of Social Responsibility?" by Dr. Nathan E Canney PE, Seattle University, and Dr. Angela R Bielefeldt, University of Colorado, Boulder
- Best Diversity Paper award (2<sup>nd</sup> place): "Into the Pipeline: A Freshman Student's Experiences of Stories Told About Engineering," by Mr. Michael Brewer, Dr. Nicola Sochacka, University of Georgia, and Dr. Joachim Walther, University of Georgia.

### ***Sterling Olmsted Award***

Steve VanderLeest revealed that the Sterling Olmsted Award would go to Juan C. Lucena (Colorado School of Minds). The award was formally presented at the LEES reception. Below is the text of the citation that accompanied the award:

The Sterling Olmsted award honors those who have made distinguished contributions to the development and teaching of liberal arts in engineering education. It is the highest award given by the Liberal Education/Engineering & Society (LEES) Division of the ASEE.

The nominating committee (Steve VanderLeest, chair; Sarah Pfatteicher, Donna Riley, and Jerry Gravander) is pleased to present the 2015 Olmsted Award to Juan Carlos Lucena, Professor in the Division of Liberal Arts and International Studies at the Colorado School of Mines, where he also serves as the Director of the Humanitarian Engineering Program (HEP).

One of his colleagues wrote in support of the nomination that Lucena “fully inhabits, embodies, and practices a scholarly identity that expresses how the humanities is, quite simply, not separate from engineering. . . . His research and teaching have demonstrated time and again that engineering is shaped by and shapes the social; that the choices we make as engineers have ramifications for sustainable development, social justice, and equality; and that the engineering curriculum needs to be rethought and remade to reflect these realities.” Dr. Lucena’s distinguished contributions to the development and teaching of liberal arts in engineering education have proceeded on several fronts. Along with Dr. Gary Downey and others, Lucena pioneered exploration into engineering cultures, resulting in an exemplary, widely disseminated course on Engineering Cultures. No U.S. educators or scholars had previously delved as deeply into how culture shapes engineering problem solving; thanks to Lucena and colleagues, we now have classroom-tested, peer-reviewed ideas on human and cultural-centered problem solving in diverse engineering education contexts, a boon to students who will work in multinational corporations and increasingly globalized contexts. When U.S. Engineers Without Borders chapters mushroomed a decade ago, Dr. Lucena was excited, yet also among the first to point out that some engineers were defining community development design problems in problematic ways—socially, culturally, ethically, and vis-à-vis long-term sustainability. To address such issues, he and two colleagues wrote a book and designed a new course of the same title, *Engineering and Sustainable Community Development*. This book has had widespread, positive ripple effects on community engagement efforts in the U.S. and beyond. Also, Lucena’s work in engineering and social justice has culminated in a course and a highly regarded textbook, *Engineering Education for Social Justice: Critical Explorations and Opportunities*. Finally, Dr. Lucena’s work in revitalizing the groundbreaking HEP has resulted in a strikingly innovative curriculum that emphasizes community service, cross-cultural perspectives, and creative and critical thinking to position engineers as agents of social change.

## 9. General Discussion and Updates

**Bylaws Changes:** In order to vote on bylaw changes, the division needs to notify division members 30 days before the vote. Voting can be completed electronically.

**Division Dues:** Institute a \$1 increase in division dues to offset the increased overhead costs to the BASS account. The motion was voted on and passed.

### **Other announcements:**

- The division chair should appoint a division member to the ASEE-wide diversity meeting to participate in dialog around diversity initiatives. This will be added to bylaws for approval by membership.

- Update on the Initiative on Communication Across the Divisions: This initiative, led by Judith Norback and Kay Neeley; joined by John Brocato, Justin Hass, and Candido Cabo, works toward cross-division fertilization of communication-related papers.
- John staffed the division table at the division mixer and reported that there were nonstop people stopping by expressing interest in the division.
- Reception: Tuesday 6/16, 7-9pm at Triple Door