



President's Report

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2014-2015

Our activities this year involved friendly relations with other political science associations, in particular with the Société québécoise de science politique in administering our joint journal. SQSP and CPSA also offered a joint reception at the IPSA conference in Montreal in August. In the fall, Patrik Fafard who represents political science to the Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences, brought to our attention the working paper 'The Impacts of Humanities and Social Sciences Research', a final version of which will be released during Congress. The paper's premise is 'that there is increasing pressure on governments, universities and individual disciplines to justify public funding of research...by describing... [its] relevance.' It takes the position that the humanities and social science community should 'get ahead of the debate'. Given the problems political scientists have been experiencing in the United States, CPSA may wish to devote some of its time and energy to considering the Federation's paper in the next year.

A key task that preoccupied the executive and staff this past year has been the implementation of the new Bylaw passed at the 2013 AGM and necessary under our Certificate of Continuance. Our task was to implement the new Bylaw while changing CPSA's traditions as little as possible. However, as required by the 2009 *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*, the Bylaw transfers the power to select officers from the members to the Board. The solution was to reinvent the nominating committee as a body that will continue to represent members concerns for maintaining balance and diversity in our leadership. It also was necessary to determine technically how to implement a complex transition. The working group that advised me and the Executive on this included Bill Cross, Neil Thomlinson and Silvina Danesi. They mapped a path of decisions needed to achieve this transition from the old to the new electoral system. The decisions were successfully implemented through a series of e-votes and votes by the Board. We are implementing their plan for this year, but there will be more decisions to make and implement in 2016.

Because of this transition, you will notice a number of changes in how we conduct our business during the conference. The new arrangements permit members to vote in person during the AGM and electronically during an extended electoral period as before. As a transitional matter, I will chair the AGM two years in a row. An additional Board meeting is also required every year immediately after the AGM to choose officers. To create time for this, the presidential address will occur on the first day of the conference, the hour before the reception sponsored by the host university. I am sure these new arrangements soon will become traditions. It has been a complex process and I would personally like to thank Bill, Neil and Silvina for helping us decide how best to proceed.

The Nominating Committee chaired by Miriam Smith, with, Peter (Jay) Smith & Éric Montpetit also deserve thanks for helping us implement the transitional arrangements. In future years, the committee also will be responsible for the demanding job of recruiting the chairs and members of

the prize juries to select those who lead our discipline in another important way. Bill Cross will acknowledge those who served on juries this year at the President's Dinner.

Another major task this year was to start overhauling our communications. This involved: CPSA assuming responsibility for and developing the format of the new POLCAN 2; improving the interactivity of the conference support part of the website; and making major changes to the website generally. In 2015-16 it will be important to establish a position on the Executive or a Board working group to lead the development of a communications strategy for the future. During this year, Debora VanNijnatten, Jessica Kolopenuk, Silvina, Michelle and Sean Hart all contributed to getting us to this point in reforming our communications. However, there is again much more to do.

Regarding another aspect of our communications, Alain Noël led a committee that successfully re-negotiated the contract for the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* with Cambridge University Press. The new contract makes provisions for open access as required by new government policy. My thanks to Alain and his committee. I am also delighted to inform you that the Journal's editorial team under the leadership of Graham White has agreed to continue for two more years, with some adjustments in responsibilities. Ideas for a second journal were considered during the Future Challenges Session at the 2014 December Board meeting. This is an issue for the future. But an immediate challenge is how to manage content to make the best use of the new website. I hope the various caucuses and sections will give thought to the best ways of using the new website, especially how to provide content that will support colleagues and students in their various roles. This will require some system for managing academic and other content.

One project I had hoped to advance this year was to recruit members from new types of institutions. With the pressure of other demands this didn't happen in 2014-15, but it will be on the agenda next year. We are exploring CPSA's future relations with the many new student associations. I participated in an interactive session at the Student caucus, organized by Jessica Kolopenuk.

A matter that unexpectedly consumed much of my time, Silvina's and that of other members of the executive involves relations between the CPSA and the two internship programmes we oversee – PIP and OLIP. In September 2014, the Clerk of the Ontario Legislature raised issues about the OLIP. The House of Commons also withdrew some of its material support for the PIP. Negotiations produced two MOUs specifying the level of support PIP will receive from the House of Commons and SSHRC. But our efforts to negotiate an MOU with the Ontario Legislature for OLIP have been more extended. Eventually, I invited Bill Cross to chair two sub-committees to investigate and make recommendations about CPSA's future roles in over-seeing these programmes, recruiting and supervising their directors and policies about relations with the two legislatures. Reports from these sub-committees will be discussed by the Board in June 2015.

Led by Board member Jonathan Malloy, who chairs the Carleton department, we helped organize a successful meeting of departmental chairs in Ottawa in January 2015. Chairs from 26 departments attended and appreciated the program Jon organized around the concerns of department chairs. There also was discussion of how relations between the CPSA Executive, Board and staff and the departments can be strengthened. One issue discussed was if the new website should try to revive the old *Bulletin's* custom of reporting news from the departments. There also was a useful discussion of the future of the departmental survey and of the *Diversity Report*. It became clear that in many departments, chairs don't have access to much of the information needed to monitor the discipline's changing demography. How such data can be obtained will be an important item for future discussion. The absence of most chairs of small departments, probably because of scarce resources, raised the issue of whether future Chairs' meetings should be held before or after the conference

instead of in the winter at the president's home university, as has been the custom. A small pop-up survey will give us more information on the views of Chairs on this issue.

In conducting the business of the association, the president depends on the efforts of our staff and volunteers on the Executive, Board and committees. For example, the wonderful conference program with its many innovations organized by Cheryl Collier and her programme committee and the great local arrangements ably undertaken by Daniel Stockemer represent many hundreds of volunteer hours. I have been blessed with support from many people who are committed to CPSA and willing to devote their energies and skills to resolving its problems and advancing its development, especially members of the Executive, notably Treasurer Luc Turgeon and our able staff. Two individuals played especially important roles – Bill Cross who chaired two committees so skillfully and Silvina Danesi, whose contributions as Executive Director go far beyond the duties of her position. Finally, my thanks to everyone who served on the Board this year.