

Vice President's Column

By Benn Joseph, Northwestern University

Greetings from Illinois! I am excited to step into this new role as vice president. This is my first VP column, and I'm writing it having just returned from our MAC Annual Meeting in Madison, Wisconsin. It was an in-person meeting! With real people! Everyone's experiences have been different over the past couple of years, but, for me, it has definitely been difficult to keep up with friends and colleagues on Zoom in the same way we used to pre-pandemic. So, finally having an opportunity to catch up in person was fantastic. Thanks to everyone who attended, both virtually and on-site, and thanks also to all our in-person attendees for adhering to the safety protocols (i.e., masking, etc.)—this is what made an in-person meeting possible! As part of this, I'd like to thank everyone involved in the planning:

2022 LAC members: Cynthia Bachhuber (cochair), Katie Nash (cochair), Kathryn Egeland, Dana Gerber-Margie, Jessica Hansen, Emil Hoelter, Meredith Lowe, Abbie Norderhaug, David Pavelich, Amy Rudersdorf, Kate Slauson

2022 PC members: Sarah Dorpinghaus (cochair), Kahlee Leingang (cochair), Scott Brouwer (interim cochair), Shelby Edwards, Matt Gorzalski, Sister Virginia Jung, OSB, Anu Kasarabada, Warren Lambert, Amy Lisinski, Michelle McClellan, Danielle Spalenka, Micaela Terronez, Brad Wiles

2022 Education Committee members: Hathaway Hester (cochair), Carrie Schwier (cochair), Sarah Cain, Ashley Howdeshell, Stefanie Hunker, Kathryn Kuntz, Ryan Leimkuehler, Tia Stinson, Matt Strandmark, Katie Blank

Thanks also to Jenna Jacobs (vendor coordinator), Rosalie Gartner (MAC Pals coordinator), Kyna Herzinger (public information officer), Kate Dietrick (webmaster), and Natalia Gutiérrez-Jones (development coordinator)

And, for anyone who was not able to travel to Madison, I'm excited that MAC could offer a hybrid option for attendance. There will still be attendees who aren't ready for a big in-person conference, as well as students or early-career members who may not be able to cover the cost of travel and attendance—and still others who may be working with reduced professional development budgets. Whatever the situation, I hope that a hybrid approach can continue to be part of our Annual Meeting offerings.

As you're reading this, I will have already begun working with outgoing vice president Michelle Sweetser on a knowledge transfer plan. There is a lot for me to learn about this position and ongoing MAC business, and I know it will be a ramping-up process for me. In fact, just attending the MAC Council meeting while in Madison was surprising in terms of the remarkable amount of behind-the-scenes work that takes place. But I feel especially fortunate to be taking on this role at a time when everything is on track . . . and perhaps even ahead of schedule!

I also wanted to provide an update on the speakers' agreement for session proposals going forward. At the meeting in Madison, Council approved the addition of two new questions to the session proposal process to evaluate session contributions as they relate to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA). In addition to requesting participants' names, institutions, session format, and an abstract of the proposal, those who submit session proposals will be asked to include a specific statement describing how the session contributes to the DEIA conversation as well as a description of how the panelists represent diversity in a number of forms (institution type, geography, career point, ability, race, ethnicity, etc.). No individual is asked to self-identify to the committee, but rather the question reports on the kinds of diversity represented by the entire panel. This data will now be captured during the proposal submission process and can be used to inform decision-making. This is an approach that supports MAC's organizational commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Sitting on the Memorial Union Terrace at UW–Madison just last week (or maybe I should say just a few months ago), enjoying refreshments from Rathskeller, I recalled my time as cochair of the Program Committee for the ill-fated MAC 2020 meeting in Des Moines, Iowa. Marcella Huggard and I, along with the rest of the PC, had put together a great program from an amazing collection of proposals and were heartbroken when that meeting had to be cancelled . . . but we're going to try Des Moines again in 2024!

In the meantime, please be sure to race on down for the Fall MAC Symposium in Indianapolis, "Driving Outreach to Victory Lane," and come on home to Chicago next year for the 2023 Annual Meeting.