

May 2011

Long-Range Plan Update

In 2006, a Long-Range Planning Committee was appointed by former ASA President Chad Berry. The twelve members of this planning committee, President Berry, and his predecessor Phil Obermiller worked with Communications Consultant Nina Gregg for two years to compile a document outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the Appalachian Studies Association, the organization's history, present, and future, and some specific strategies and goals for making the ASA stronger, more effective, and sustainable. The result of this work was a 129-page report entitled "The Road Ahead: The Appalachian Studies Association's Plan for Action, 2008-2013."

We haven't forgotten about this plan! The Long-Range Plan was implemented in 2008, and several suggested actions from the plan have been carried out in the areas of Governance and Leadership, Programs, Infrastructure and Systems, Finance and Development, Communications, and Membership.

See our **[Long-Range Plan Report](#)** and the **[Strategic Plan Matrix](#)**

- ❖ **Engagement and Sustainability:** These are the two key commitments of the Plan of Action for 2008-2013 listed on page 22 of Section 2 of the Long-Range Plan Report.

- ✓ **Engagement.**
- ✓ **Sustainability.**

- ❖ **Governance and Leadership**

- ✓ **Review or revise terms of office to ensure continuity.** To help all ASA offices, chairs, and committees to understand their roles and duties, we have revised terms of office resulting in a new presidential model in which the President serves as VP the year prior to their term and then as the Conference Chairperson for the conference the year after their term as President. This means that ASA Presidents are not only prepared for their duties before entering office, but also that they can stay on and use their knowledge with conference organization and with mentoring the next office-holder. Additionally, at-large members of the Steering Committee serve 3 year rotating terms to ensure continuity.
- ✓ **Identify ex-officio members of Steering Committee.** Ex-officio members (non-voting) are now identified in the bylaws, on the website, in the conference program, and in the ASA Handbook Steering Committee lists. This has helped clarify who votes, the number in the quorum, etc.
- ✓ **Create and/or update bylaws, Officer Committee Handbooks, and Procedures Manuals.** The Executive Director has written and continues to update and revise an ASA Handbook which includes descriptions for most officers, committee members, and staff working within the ASA.
- ✓ **Formalize a code of operations governing scholarships.** Scholarship forms are now posted online with instructions for submission and selection. The amount of scholarships awarded is based on funding from the ARC and other organizations and a deadline is set each year for informing scholarship recipients. Applicants are informed via e-mail whether they will receive the scholarship, and recipients must inform Executive Director and the Scholarship chair of their acceptance or rejection of the scholarship.
- ✓ **Continue annual review and revision of bylaws, currently done by President Elect.** The bylaws are reviewed every year by the President Elect and proposed changes are brought before the Steering Committee in July at the Retreat. If approved by the Steering Committee, the

proposed changes are listed in Appalink along with a ballot for membership vote. Changes that pass are added to the bylaws and published on the webpage.

- ✓ **Hold more frequent meetings of the Steering Committee; explore holding some meetings via teleconferences.** Each spring and summer, additional meetings of the Steering Committee are held via teleconference.
- ✓ **Review policies and procedures concerning submission of documents to Archives. Update and clarify, if necessary.** Instructions for submissions and a list of suggested archival materials are included in the appendices of the ASA Handbook.
- ✓ **Instructions on submission to Archives will be included in all Handbooks and Procedural Manuals.** Included in appendices of the ASA Handbook.
- ✓ **Develop/update position and job descriptions for staff (employees, contracts, student assistants, volunteers, etc.) based on needs of ASA including skills sets, etc.** Descriptions for staff included in ASA Handbook and intern descriptions included in annual call for interns.
- ✓ **Hold annual Steering Committee Retreats to launch and assess implementation of the LRP, to examine the role of the Steering Committee, its function and structure, and advance the ASA's vision.** A Steering Committee retreat is held each summer.
- ✓ **Publicize ASA mission, vision, and values.** The ASA has publicized these through its Mountaintop Removal, KCTC Tenure, and Radford University Resolutions as well as through its Memorandum of Understanding with ARC and the CBS Letter of Protest. The ASA also publicizes its commitment to environmental sustainability through events at the annual conference, including the seed swap, reusable bag swap, and Green "Appal" Campaign.

❖ Programs

- ✓ **Develop Conference Planning & Fundraising Handbook with guidelines for structure, process, and work plans.** The ASA Handbook now includes appendices with conference planning checklists, budget templates, helpful hints and resources, sample letters, and correspondence from previous conferences that can be used to assist new conference chairs, program committees, and local arrangements committees with their duties.
- ✓ **Institutionalize the Conference evaluation process and use the data collected by the Conference Assessment Committee and from future Conference Evaluations to improve each Conference.** Every year, attendees receive conference packets which include programs with evaluation forms tucked inside. A place at the Registration table is provided for returning each form. Forms are reviewed, tallied, and passed on to the next conference committee.
- ✓ **Explore setting conference themes several years in advance, with participation of Steering Committee and attention to ASA mission, vision, and LRP.** Program committees are appointed 2 years in advance and Conference Chairs/ Past Presidents have three years to work on establishing a conference theme.
- ✓ **Ensure that the annual meeting of the membership (business meeting) plays a prominent role in the conference, addresses all required reports and actions, is an opportunity for members to become informed about and engage with the association, and is designed and scheduled accordingly.** During the annual business meeting (held after the Saturday lunch) members are briefed about and have a chance to vote on ASA business.
- ✓ **Use the information collected throughout the long-range planning process to strengthen relationship of Conference theme to Conference content and papers; consider criteria for acceptance/refusal of proposals; develop plenary sessions that advance ASA mission and goals and Conference theme.** Conference proposals are evaluated based on their appropriateness to the conference theme. Plenary Sessions relevant to the Conference theme are scheduled outside of concurrent sessions so that all participants may attend.

- ✓ **Design and schedule opportunities at the Conference for new members to meet and learn about the Association.** We have made some progress with this by including multiple meet-and-greet events, and in 2011, adding some student gatherings and socials. Although these are not specifically reserved for new members, offering members a chance to meet in a more informal atmosphere and make connections will help strengthen the organization. Providing opportunities for students to gather and network at the conference will help build relationships within the organization and build a new generation of members to sustain ASA in the future.
- ✓ **Seek Indexing in maximum number of appropriate locations.** Full-text access and/or abstracts access to the JAS now available through the EBSCO Host and Academic Search Premiere Databases, ERIC, and the Wilson Company. A contract with the JSTOR database is in progress.
- ✓ **Undertake thorough review of the entire website content to identify necessary revisions, updating and removals.** Members have contributed input to the website. The website has been migrated to a new server. A web designer has been hired and is creating a new design for the website. During the 2010-2011 school year, an intern scanned the website, compiled a list of revisions/additions needed, and worked on updating content.
- ✓ **Solicit member input through newsletter, membership renewal/conference registration, website, and e-mail.** Member input is now solicited through various channels, including Appalink, contact information on the website, conference evaluations, Facebook, and Twitter.
- ✓ **Indicator of Success-Added Assistant Editors.** The JAS now has 3 assistant editors: Martha Billups, Wendy Welch, and Thomas Alan Holmes.

❖ Infrastructure and Systems

- ✓ **Identify and implement regular periodic off-site back-up of essential records and resources (membership data, financial data, account numbers and passwords, etc.) Consider Archives and other off-site storage for this purpose.** We have included instructions for sending materials to the ASA Archives at Berea College, as well as a suggested list of archival materials, in the ASA Handbook. Additionally, all computer files on the Executive Director's computer and tax records are backed-up with Carbonite. Tax records (1994-2007) have been sent to archives.
- ✓ **Establish and maintain clear channels of communication between ASA and its host institution.** A position for a liaison between the ASA and Marshall University has been established.
- ✓ **Expand ability to accept credit card payment for donations, membership, and conference registration.** Registration for the Conference can be paid online or on-site with Visa or MasterCard.

❖ Finance and Development

- ✓ **Investigate feasibility and decide whether to embark on an endowment or capital campaign.** An endowment campaign was begun in 2008 with a challenge from former ASA President Shaunna Scott to help raise funds for ASA sustainability. Members receive an opportunity to contribute each year at the conference during the Sunday brunch. Additionally, donations are always accepted in memory or in honor of someone.

❖ Communications

- ✓ **Create a Communications Committee to be composed of the Web Site Chair, Newsletter Editor, PR Specialist, and a facilitator/chair.** A communications committee was appointed in 2008 and is currently working on a project for updating and migrating the ASA website.

- ✓ **Determine how best to communicate opportunities to become engaged with ASA; e.g., list of registration membership application, on website, in Appalink, etc.** An “ASA Needs You” form is now included in each final conference program, which members can return at the registration table. Members can check off any positions they would be willing to be nominated for or assist with. Descriptions of offices and nomination forms are included in Appalink. Volunteer forms are now available online.
- ✓ **Explore creating linkages with other listservs.** Subscription information for the APPALNET listserv and the H-Net Discussion Board is included on the website.

❖ Membership

- ✓ **Extend courtesies and opportunities to new members and/or those who are attending their first conference; e.g., 1st-timer ribbon on nametag, special reception, etc.** Each year at the conference, first-time attendees are now receiving ribbons to attach to their nametags. Steering Committee members are asked to welcome these new attendees.
- ✓ **Foster/strengthen relationship with ARC and other relevant agencies, organizations, nonprofits, etc.** In 2009, the ASA signed a Memorandum of Understanding intended to “promote a mutually beneficial partnership between the two organizations.”
- ✓ **There is evidence of increased diversity, reflecting the diversity of the region of members active in ASA events, committees and leadership.** One area of membership diversity that has become active at the ASA conference is the GLBTQ membership. Camp Appalachee, which is expected to become an annual event, began at the 2011 conference in Richmond to provide a safe space for networking at the conference.