

65th Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Philosophical Association  
March 27-28, 2015, Millsaps College, Jackson MS  
**Minutes of Annual Business Meeting**

A) The business meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday March 28th in Olin Hall at Millsaps College.

B) Members present included: Bart Moffatt, Mississippi State University (President); Steven Smith, Millsaps College (Vice-President); Neil Manson, The University of Mississippi (Secretary-Treasurer); Mike Bruno and David Spewak, Mississippi State University; Donovan Wishon (last year's Vice-President) and Bryan Smyth, the University of Mississippi; Kristen Brown Golden, Millsaps College; Melissa Ebbers, the University of Memphis; and graduate students Chris Lucibella, Patrick Laine, Emily McWilliams, and Sam Johnson, who sat in as observers.

C) Manson began by explaining the lengthy gap since the last time there had been an official business meeting of the MPA. He explained that, from 2011-2014, a series of topical conferences co-sponsored by the MPA were held at Mississippi State University (on Experimental Philosophy in 2011, on Political Libertarianism in 2012, and on Philosophy of Biology in 2013) and at the University of Mississippi (on Consciousness in 2014). These conferences were mapped out at the 2010 annual meeting. Since these conferences were topical and sometimes invitation-only, they did not draw participants from philosophy departments throughout the state. As a result, business meetings were not held. Manson stated his goal was to rectify this by having a business meeting at the 2015 MPA.

D) Manson made a statement regarding a change to how the MPA maintains its finances. In order to avoid monthly banking fees that arose from keeping under \$5000 in the MPA account at First National Bank of Oxford, he transferred the money to an account maintained by the Department of Philosophy at the University of Mississippi. Henceforth checks written to the MPA must be made out to "University of Mississippi - MPA." As necessary, payments made by the MPA will require submission of a W-9 form.

E) Manson made a statement regarding MPA finances. As of the day of the meeting, there was \$2,207.29 in the account. In addition, \$260 in membership dues from 13 members was collected at or before the meeting, leading to a total balance of \$2,467.29 at the time of the business meeting.

F) Moffatt noted that this balance was large relative to past balances maintained by the MPA and suggested we might stop collecting membership dues. Manson replied that a bill for the 2015 conference had yet to be submitted by Smith. Manson also noted that the balance for the MPA had been inflated recently; due to the excellent internal fundraising of John Bickle, bills for the 2011 and 2012 conferences had been fully covered by Mississippi State University. Therefore the MPA had two years of money coming in and none going out. That money was drawn down by the conferences at the University of Mississippi, so that at the end of 2014, \$807.29 was left in the MPA account. In order to

be fair to Mississippi State University, the University of Mississippi contributed \$1250 back to the MPA, with Wishon contributing an additional \$150 from his research funds. This will leave the organizer of the next conference at Mississippi State with the ability to draw more from MPA funds and less from Mississippi State funds than has been the case recently. After the 2016 conference, said Manson, the MPA balance is expected to be back to normal historical levels. Moffatt accepted this explanation.

G) Manson proposed changing the funding model for the MPA. On the new model, instead of collecting dues from individual faculty members at the four multi-person philosophy departments in the state, each department would pay an annual fee: \$200 each for Mississippi State University and the University of Mississippi, \$100 each for Millsaps College and the University of Southern Mississippi. The MPA would still accept membership dues from those not faculty at multi-person departments, but would not require it. Instead of collecting dues individually, at future meetings the hosts would collect a conference registration fee and using those fees to pay bills, only using MPA funds after the receipts for conference registration had been exhausted. After discussion, this proposal was adopted unanimously.

G) Smith suggested we continue with the older tradition of having open-call conferences rather than thematic ones; he said that model tended to involve more Mississippi philosophers and so make Mississippi philosophers more likely to attend. Manson, Moffatt, and Brown expressed preference for the newer, thematic model for conferences. Brown suggested the old model led to poorly-attended conferences. Manson concurred. It was agreed that, going forward, the issue of whether to have a thematic rather than an open-call conference for the next year's meeting would be decided at that year's business meeting at the same time a new vice-president was selected.

H) Prizes were awarded to the best two graduate student papers: Kenneth Noe of Southern Illinois University-Carbondale (\$150) and Emily McWilliams of Harvard University (\$100).

I) The officers for next year were selected: Steven Smith, Millsaps College, President; Mike Bruno, Mississippi State University, Vice-President; and Neil Manson, the University of Mississippi, Secretary-Treasurer. Mike Bruno announced his intention to hold the 2016 conference at Mississippi State University, with the anticipated topic being "Attention and the Philosophy of Mind."

J) Smith was thanked for running an excellent conference. The theme was "Philosophy of Race," with Robert Bernasconi (Penn State University) as Friday night's keynote speaker.

The meeting adjourned at 1:15.

Neil A. Manson  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Mississippi Philosophical Association

Department of Philosophy and Religion  
The University of Mississippi  
University, MS 38677-1848  
[namanson@olemiss.edu](mailto:namanson@olemiss.edu)