

Minutes of the February 11, 2008 SGB Meeting

Participants:

Erik Altman, SIGMICRO Chair	Diana Marculescu, SIGDA Chair; SGB EC
Rajeev Alur, SIGBED Past Chair	John McCormick, SIGAda Chair
Florence Appel, SIGCAS Chair	Andrew McGettrick, Education Board Chair
William Aspray, History Committee	Brad Mehlenbacher, SIGDOC Chair
Vijay Atluri, SIGSAC Sec/Treasurer	Ethan Munson, SIGWEB Chair
Barrett Bryant, SIGAPP Chair	Klara Nahrstedt, SIGMM Chair
Erin Butler, SIGGRAPH Project Manager	Scott Owen, SIGGRAPH President
James Callan, SGB EC Member at Large	Barbara Owens, SIGCSE Chair
Donna Cappel, ACM Director of SIG Services	David Pennock, SIGecom Chair
Ashley Cozzi, Admin Assist. SIG Services	Gregory Piatetsky, SIGKDD Chair
Jack Davidson, SGB EC Member	Robert Pierce, SIGDOC Vice Chair
Stuart Feldman, ACM President	Raghu Ramakrishnan, SIGMOD Chair
Kathleen Fisher, SIGPLAN Chair	Darren Ramdin, Assoc.Dir., Office of Fin. Serv.
Lance Fortnow, SIGACT Vice-Chair	Han Reichgelt, SIGITE Chair
Mark Giesbrecht, SIGSAM Chair	George Riley, SIGSIM Vice-Chair
Maria Gini, SIGART Chair	Patricia Ryan, ACM Chief Operating Officer
Wayne Graves, ACM Director of IS	Henning Schulzrinne, SIGCOMM Vice Chair
William Griswold, SIGSOFT Chair	Leonard Shustek, History Committee
Mary Hall, History Committee	Janice Sipior, SIGMIS Chair
Vicki Hanson, SIGACCESS Chair, SGB EC	Richard Snodgrass, History Committee
Carol Hutchins, History Committee	Chris Stephenson, Exec. Director, CSTA
Ginger Ignatoff, ACM SIG Services Prog. Dir	Simon Taylor, SIGSIM Chair
Yannis Ioannidis, SIGMOD Vice Chair	Doug Terry, SIGOPS Chair
Julie Jacko, SIGCHI President	Moshe Vardi, CACM EiC
Dave Johnson, SIGMOBILE Chair	Robert Walker, SGB ACM Council Rep
Norman Jouppi, SGB ACM Council Rep	John White, ACM Executive Director
Joseph Konstan, SGB Chair	Darrell Whitley, SIGEVO Chair
Guy Larocque, SIGAPL Chair	Carey Williamson, SIGMETRICS Chair
David Lewis, SIGIR Secretary	David Wise, History Committee
Liz Liddy, SIGIR Chair	Alexander Wolf, SGB ACM Council Rep
Leila Lyons, SIGUCCS Chair	David Wood, SIGARCH Vice Chair
Michael Mahoney, History Committee	

1.0 Welcome

1.1 Welcome, Introductions (Hanson)

Hanson began the meeting by introducing the SIG Officers, Executive Committee HQ, and the History Committee.

1.2 History Committee Review of Members (Mary Hall)-

Co-sponsoring oral histories will encourage SIGs to work with the History Committee in order to compile information on the history of individual SIGs and their conferences such as HOPL for SIGPLAN. Archiving information from past conferences will be beneficial in many ways. Wayne discussed creating an archive, which would be a depository for SIG history and an information repository. Furthering the organization of records, the History Committee is in the process of launching a paper archive for conference papers and is also looking into adopting a website for the winners of the Turing Award.

2.0 Opening Remarks (Feldman)

Hanson introduced ACM President Stu Feldman who recently announced the winners of the 2007 Turing Award. A discussion of new awards commenced. In the future, the goal is to enlarge the size of the Turing Award as a way to help increase visibility for ACM and the computing field as a whole. A current concern is the difficulty ACM is facing explaining topics in the field to non-specialists. SIGs are encouraged to make any suggestions they may have on this issue.

Stu expressed his excitement about the first issue of the new CACM which will be published in July. The goal is to make the new CACM a must-read flagship publication. CACM will include Queue content which will hopefully appeal to the practitioners reading the magazine.

During last summer's retreat, it was decided that all ACM programs with a budget of \$150,000 to \$200,000 would undergo a review in 3 year cycles. This idea was modeled after the review of the SIG programs. Each activity within the ACM programs would be strategically assessed to determine what their goals are, how they plan on meeting those goals, and whether or not they are successful. These reviews would help in determining how funds are allocated to them.

Feldman next discussed the continued effort in determining ACM's international role. There is currently a functioning committee in India, and the satellite office in China plans to have an educational summit of the China Task Force.

3.0 Report from the CEO (J. White)

White reported that membership is at an all-time high and has been growing steadily over the past few years. When last reported, IEEE- CS was sized at 79,168 members. ACM has now been the largest society for computing for the past two years with current membership exceeding 87,000.

ACM's financial outlook looks good with a projected net of \$4.5 million. The projection revenue for the DL is up. The SIGs look very healthy with a \$3.8 million surplus due to an increase in conference revenue. However, due to the investment in CACM, ACM revenue will be tighter.

White discussed the new DL business model which will set up pricing on a multilevel system based on usage. He also touched briefly on the new Author pages which should be up shortly.

White discussed the various new initiatives for ACM. One of our primary goals is the effort and discussions taking place in regard to ACM's international role. SIGs are being encouraged to take conferences outside of the United States. ACM is also hoping to increase geographic diversity across ACM leadership. Currently there are more non-US members in the organization; however, we are still lacking in diversity within the areas of ACM, SGB, SIG, and Council leadership. The goal in diversifying management is to broaden how we engage the world. This may be met by encouraging SIG leaders to nominate diverse members of the community for various positions within each SIG.

The ACM office in China is up and running and students are in the process of translating paper abstracts in the DL to Chinese. The task force in India will be meeting this fall although they have encountered some challenges due to smaller research communities and the quality of Computing Education in the area. SIGs are encouraged to hold research conferences in both China and India.

There are over 10,000 ACM members in Europe and White impressed on them that it is time to re-think the role of ACM in Europe. He proposes a one-day workshop to collectively devise ways in which to move forward in Europe. SIGOPS holds EuroSys annually.

In regards to image and health in the field, ACM is currently one of nine members of the Image Task Force whose goal is to change the view many have of the field. In closing, White briefly discussed the importance of CSTA and its effect on Computer Science Education.

Education Policy Committee

It was proposed that the scientific community should be involved in discussions of education policy in order to determine where computing fits into the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Coalition. There is currently a belief in STEM that computing is not important, and the Committee is looking to dispel this idea. The hope is that strides will be made toward adding AP Computer Science as a viable elective for mathematics or science.

SIGOPS raised a question regarding whether data is available on careers for computer science graduates. White stated that they were trying to push National Science Foundation to track this as NSF was viewed the most logical organization to do so.

It was suggested that a multi-level pricing system be enacted for DL, ACM membership, and for organizations outside of the United States that are not academic institutions.

Ethan Munson of SIGWEB introduced ideas for a Task Force presence in Brazil.

Although they do not have a member on the panel, SIGCSE is influencing the Education Policy Committee.

A question was raised regarding DL content from other publishers such as IEEE and Springer. We currently share meta-data but other publishers are protective of their content.

4.0 SIGDOC Program Review (Mehlenbacher) [Viability](#) [Slides](#)

Mehlenbacher gave a brief history of the SIG. SIGDOC is healthy and increasing, however, its greatest concern is its decline in members. The newsletter remains popular with the members the group has retained.

Recommendation: The SGB congratulates SIGDOC on its operational performance and finds it viable to continue its status for the next 2 years. The SGB requests that SIGDOC undertake an evaluation of its decrease in membership and conference participation during that time, and that it present its conclusions and plan as part of its Spring 2010 viability review.

Motion: Unanimous

Dave Johnson posed a question about increasing the paper acceptance rate.

Ethan Munson hypothesized that it might be necessary to accept all of these papers in order to encourage attendance and promote community growth.

Brad Mehlenbacher suggested that we begin to think about standards in different ways. There is the possibility to become a small community with closely knit members.

Norman Jouppi introduced the idea that conferences with low acceptance rates have workshops and tutorials with lower standards.

Barrett Bryant suggested having separate tracks.

Some ways in which to promote SIGDOC include reaching out to technical communities and making conference fees lower in order to appeal to a larger audience.

It was proposed that awards be given out alternatively.

Joe Konstan suggested that although they are experiencing success in execution, it is a good time to reflect on which direction they think the SIG should go.

5.0 SIGAPL Program Review (Walker, Larocque): [Viability](#) [Slides](#)

Walker reports that membership is reasonably strong with a healthy fund balance. APL has one award which has been given out once since 2001. There are no plans to choose a recipient in 2008.

Larocque discussed SIGAPL's history dating back to the 1960's. He expressed frustration with the SGB Executive Committee in regard to communicating with the APL EC when the Chairman was unresponsive.

Larocque discussed chronology of events that led to placing SIGAPL in transition. He then gave a brief summary of the business plan that SIGAPL came up with including getting Quote Quad back on schedule, updating the APL website, reinstating the annual conference and handing out the Kenneth E. Iverson Award.

APL organized with OOPSLA for their 2007 conference, which is believed to be a good relationship. Three vendors wanted to be involved, and one vendor put together a full-day workshop with attendees from both APL and OOPSLA.

Konstan reported that the SGB has made several attempts to reach out to the past chair of SIGAPL who was unresponsive. Since APL was placed in transition, ACM and the SGB EC have made efforts to work with SIGAPL to encourage a long term plan. Although there has been a great deal of effort to get out of transition, SIGAPL has not put in place a long term plan for sustainability. It does not appear as though the current website has been updated in months. There has been no discussion of future plans for the award or for a 2008 conference. Konstan saluted the work of a small group of members but does not believe that they have the core needed to continue.

Larocque did not feel as though the website was the proper place to display this information and instead has sent out newsletters. He plans to work with OOPSLA again in 2008 for APL.

Konstan stated that plans for OOPSLA are already in place and there has been no discussion with their leadership or ACM as to having APL co-locate for the 2008 conference.

Larocque feels that becoming part of SIGPLAN will only decrease visibility for the APL community.

Fisher pointed out that PLAN wants APL to be happy to join SIGPLAN. They can continue to do the things they are doing now and feel as though they are their own community.

Jack Davidson discussed how the SIGPLAN conferences are run by a steering committee but operate on their own. He believes that APL can keep a community under SIGPLAN with a strong committee but with less worrying about things other than the conference and their community. This may invigorate the community by turning its focus to particular things such as the conference.

Larocque feels that SIGAPL is more than a conference and is worried about reporting to SIGPLAN. The SIGAPL community as a whole has had negative reactions to what has been going on. Larocque has had to work very hard to keep one of their Executive Committee members to continue their role after discussion of resigning. Larocque thinks that there should be a discussion and plan set forth between SIGPLAN and SIGAPL prior to the dissolution of APL.

--CLOSED SESSION: Resolution

Recommendation: The SGB recommends that SIGAPL be dechartered and that the SIGAPL leadership work with the SIGPLAN leadership to hold the APL'xx conference under SIGPLAN sponsorship as well as continue SIGAPL's newsletter and other activities.

The SGB thanks the current SIGAPL leadership, in particular SIGAPL's Chair Guy R. Larocque, VC Robert Brown, Secretary/Treasurer Steven H. Rogers, Members-at-Large James Korn, Lynne Shaw, Devon McCormick and Newsletter Editor Manuel Alfonsca and commends them for their efforts to reengage the ACM community interested in array programming languages.

Motion: [30 For, 3 Opposed, 0 Abstentions]

6.0 Education Board (McGettrick) - [Slides](#)

In order to move forward, McGettrick believes it is essential that the Board and Council evolve. There should be continuous review of the membership of both as well as discussion on how both bodies can be more effective in supporting the community. The SIGs can help identify the future of both.

McGettrick discussed the mission of both the Board and the Council and the priority we are facing right now with the declining enrollments in the computing field. This is considered a crisis for the field. There is a review of education related activities across ACM. What is happening within the SIGs in terms of education? We need the SIGs' help in looking at what is happening now and what we can do in the future. McGettrick touched briefly on future plans for a National Summit in Computing Education.

7.0 CACM Update (Vardi)- [Slides](#)

Vardi touched on how last year's SGB meeting was the beginning of the discussion for the re-design of CACM. There are several new members at ACM Headquarters who have been working on graphics and re-design of CACM.

Fourteen SIGs responded to Vardi's previous request for paper nominations. Eight papers have been selected to be printed in the first few issues of CACM. Each article will have a one-page review from an expert in that particular field of interest.

A question was posed regarding who should be nominating papers and if they can come from conferences not sponsored by ACM. It was determined that papers can come from conferences outside of the ACM umbrella. Each SIG will develop how it is going to select papers to submit to an authorized nominator. There is not a requirement for a separate nominating committee but there needs to be some form of a filtering system in regard to what papers should be submitted.

A question was posed as to how many papers should be submitted. SIGs are asked to keep in mind the scale, and that CACM will publish a total of fifty papers throughout the year. The editorial focus will be mainly on the quality of the paper and the breadth of interest and diversity.

Someone wondered if they would be able to publish the same paper in both a journal and CACM. Vardi believes that since journals and CACM are completely different mediums, it would be fine to publish a long article in a journal and later submit a shorter and broader version to CACM. The main objective is to provide value to the broader ACM membership.

A question of deadlines for submission still remains – when should one submit nominations?

8.0 DSP (Bryant)

The Speakership program has been launched, and is in a stage of preparation. It is requested that SIGs think internationally when nominating speakers and look for people with diverse backgrounds. Bryant was asked for back-up, and discussion ensued about the value of the printed back ups. EC is happy to have a file sent to them via email with the slides posted online to the agenda.

Motion: SGB to GO GREEN.

Action: SIG Services will distribute back-up for future SGB meetings electronically, in a single attachment. No paper copies will be made available on-site. Name tents will not be used in the future.

8.1 SIGSPATIAL (Callan) [Proposal](#) [Slides](#)

Jamie Callan reported on a proposal to create a new SIG in Spatial Information: SIGSpatial. They have put together an extensive organization and formation committee. This group began as the GIS workshop at CIKM and was granted a one-year agreement with ACM to use the ACM name for its 2007 conference. They were told that after the 2007 conference, they would need to find a home at ACM. The name was broadened to SIGSpatial in order to be more appealing to ACM and to a more wide-ranging audience in the future. Callan reviewed the scope and topics that the SIG would like to be interested in.

Proposal: The SGB grants SIG status to SIGSpatial, effective July 1, 2008, contingent upon approval by the SGB EC of all of the following materials to be submitted by March 31, 2008.

1. A Set of SIGSpatial bylaws.
2. A SIGSpatial budget for the ACM fiscal year starting July 1, 2008 and
3. A statement of SIGSpatial Member Benefits

A question of viability was proposed as the group still needs to work out the bylaws, budget and member benefits.

SIGMOD reacted with concerns about the series and the fact that there is a large overlap with SIGMOD. The topics that do not relate to SIGMOD are already well-established topics. The group believes that SIGSpatial is a copy of the SIGMOD structure and would therefore be taking a slice of SIGMOD. They believe it is moving away from having SIGs work together and toward becoming more specialized and segregated communities. The argument was summed up with the debate that forming SIGSpatial would be a disservice to the field of science.

In rebuttal, SIGSpatial expressed that they felt as though SIGMOD has not supported some of the topics that they will include. They see the field as encompassing a large area and that the development of a new SIG will bring in new members. SIGSpatial pointed out that only twelve of the attendees at their conference were SIGMOD members.

Piatetsky represented KDD and reported that they think the SIG is unique and support its induction. Henning Schulzrinne of SIGCOMM also thinks it is a good idea.

Dave Johnson voiced his concern about an overlap with SIGMOBILE. He said that mobility is about moving within space.

Owen is also concerned with an overlap with SIGGRAPH and worries that it will result in the loss of the visualization community. He suggested that a bridge between the two SIGs should be further investigated as opposed to simply starting a new structure that compartmentalizes.

White expressed concern that ACM might do a disservice by worrying about SIG turf issues rather than in supporting new communities.

Fisher pointed out that the fact that three SIGs think there is an overlap demonstrates that there is a community to support.

Norm Jouppi hypothesized that this community may feel as though they will get lost by becoming part of a SIG. In response, Konstan wanted to make sure that the group understands that there are several alternatives to creating a new SIG, including finding a home within an existing SIG and obtaining co-sponsorship of conferences.

Question: Does the SGB Executive Committee have the authorization to move forward on this issue? Yes

9.0 CSTA Report (Stephenson) [Report Slides](#)

Stephenson reported that CSTA is now three years old and while they once promised to have 2,500 members, they have exceeded that goal with 5,360 participants. They are looking to see membership growth upwards of 10,000. CSTA has been successful in determining the needs of K-12 teachers.

The group understands that the holes in their program primarily are in the middle of the country and they are working toward filling them. They are excited about their new relationship with SIGCSE and future plans to embark on road shows traveling to different schools.

Stephenson discussed how the SGB funds have been used over the years as well as their plans for sustainability. Stephenson stressed the important role these funds have and will continue to play in the progress of CSTA. Future SGB funding will be used for any international efforts that CSTA undertakes in the coming years including the plan for future international symposia following the success of two held this year in Africa and Israel.

They have implemented a plan for sustainability and intend to be a growth organization for the next seven years with the intentions of becoming a stable organization independent from their reliance on ACM and SGB funding.

They expressed how important and invaluable the role of ACM/SGB has been to their growth and membership. They have built a loyal audience and have implemented a concrete system to know how members of their community feel about the organization.

Konstan discussed the history of CSTA and SGB Executive Committee. He recommended that funding be decreased over the next six years.

Bryant posed the question: What is a CS teacher?

Stephenson focused on addressing teachers from a broad spectrum. Even the teachers in K-12 teaching applications/word can be moved to the next level. Stephenson discussed the Texas Model as well as developments in Elementary Education. Programs such as ALICE allow you to teach by looking at things from your audience's level. There has also been a continued effort to work with other organizations to increase CSTA international outreach.

Recommendation: The SGB congratulates CSTA on its accomplishments over the past three years, and allocates the SGB allocates the following, from DL revenue, to support the CSTA.

2008-09	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
\$100K	\$75K	\$65K	\$50K	\$35K

The SGB funding shall be annually renewable, for a period of 6 years, subject to yearly presentations to the SGB by CSTA leadership and review by the SGB.

Motion: [Unanimous]

Konstan expressed the SGB EC's appreciation to Jack Davidson for taking on the role of Publications Advisor.

Cappo will be working with IEEE to establish MOU's for co-sponsored events.

Walker discussed upcoming elections. They are in the process of putting together a slate for SGB chair, council representatives and members at large. The committee consists of Joe Konstan, Bob Walker and Donna Cappo

Konstan touched briefly on how well we are doing with SIG leaders of the past taking ACM positions.

Konstan then discussed the effort that needs to be put forth to take better care of our conference chairs. New conference leaders need to understand that a conference is part of a series and the ownership by ACM of a conference.

We are in need of additional liaisons for education board members and USACM.

Konstan noted this is the last SGB meeting he will attend as SGB Chair.

10.0 Best Practices

There was a discussion regarding PC meetings in person or over the internet.

In terms of the PC Committee workshops, MM believes they can be online but feels that the main conference should be done in person.

MOD thinks that this decision should be left to the PC chair and should follow the same process of discussion with or without face-to-face meetings.

METRICS has a double-blind flagship conference but the PC is in person.

WEB announced that their group will have their first online meeting this year.

UCCS mainly uses communications via electronic mail with occasional face-to-face toward the end.

ECOM expressed skepticism with regard to whether the face-to-face actually helps considering the expense.

DOC uses mostly double-blind.

ACT handles all major conferences in-person but uses “Easy Share” for smaller meetings. They are concerned with arranging for international participation in the meetings.

BED has experienced no problems with electronic PC.

PLAN uses different forms for various meetings. They realize that some serve on the PC committee in order to go to the meetings and have face-to-face time with their colleagues, however, they are consistently concerned with their carbon footprint.

ARCH uses a double-blind for ISCA. They have found that electronic forms are fine for smaller meetings but are not effective for large conferences.

For ISSAC, SAM has a diverse PC for the international portion so much is done electronically.

IR previously handled everything in person but they are currently discussing moving over to electronic forms.

DOC has found that electronic options offer a better process for review.

MICRO usually does in-person double-blinds, but cases will be virtual this year.

Many of COMM’s conferences combine communication forms with many having pre-electronic discussions.

Bryant announced that each PC has its own electronic meeting.

CONEXT and SIGCOMM have shadow PCs in which a group of volunteers review the same set of papers as part of a learning process in a training facility.

Almost all MOBILE meetings are in-person but attempts are made to co-locate PC meetings for one conference at another conference. Their workshops meet electronically for the most part.

ITE has no PC committee. Instead, the PC chair sends the papers out to three reviewers. They are trying to understudy a PC chair so they can take over.

APL expressed their belief that electronic methods are the way of the future.

Similarly, KDD has been using forms of electronic conference management.

ART uses a two-tier PC committee in which the committee reviews first, followed by the chairs.

MIS also has a two-step process in which email is used before members meet at a non-major ACM conference.

SOFT understands the burden and restrictions of travel but does meet face-to-face. They try to hold PC meetings at other conferences.

Ada believes face-to-face is important but also hold small double-blind conferences via email.

DA also holds reviews as double-blind except for one workshop. They feel that electronic meetings would not work for them, although their small events are web-based. PC meetings do take place at other conferences and all large events are held in-person. For DATE, DA holds a face-to-face meeting with 350-400 PC members.

WEB has low funding for some committees, which restricts travel. As a result, they mostly do online reviewing and international PCs for small conferences.

GRAPH has face to face for GRAPH and GRAPH ASIA. The smaller meetings vary.

CHI has a lot of variation depending on conference.

ACCESS uses online systems mostly.

OPS has in-person meetings as they think they work better and have higher-quality discussions. Started PC light committee that does not have to go to the meeting. SOSF uses double-blind reviewing but finds there are difficulties in writing your paper anonymously. Also tried a shadow PC.

Stu closed the meeting by saying his farewells as ACM President.

The meeting was adjourned at 4 p.m.