

**SIG Governing Board Meeting
Monday, March 7, 2011**

Asad Ali, Information Systems, ACM
James Allan, Chair, SIGIR
Erik Altman, Chair, SIGMICRO
Florence Appel, Chair SIGCAS
Elisa Bertino, Chair, SIGSAC
Ron Boisvert, Co-Chair, Publications Board
Barbara Boucher Owens, SGB EC
Donna Cappo, Director, ACM SIG Services
Alain Chesnais, President, ACM
Ashley Cozzi, Program Coordinator, ACM
Bruce Davie, Chair, SIGCOM
Matthew Dwyer, Vice-Chair, SIGSOFT
Curtis Dyreson, SIGMOD EC
Lance Fortnow, Chair, SIGACT
Irene Frawley Program Coordinator, ACM
Wayne Graves, Director, ACM Information Systems
Adrienne Griscti, Program Manager, ACM
Brent Hailpern, History Committee
Drew Hamilton, Chair SIGSIM
Vicki Hanson, Chair, SGB EC
Bob Haring-Smith, Chair SIGUCCS
Ginger Ignatoff, Program Manager, ACM
Yannis Ioannidis, Chair, SIGMOD
David Johnson, Past Chair, SIGMOBILE
Jeremy Johnson, Chair, SIGSAM
Joseph Konstan, SGB EC, Publications Board
Ann Lane, Administrative Assistant, ACM SIG Services
Gang Luo, Chair, SIGHIT
Patrick Madden, Chair, SIGDA
Andrew McGettrick, Publications Board
Brad Mehlenbacher, Chair, SIGDOC
April Mosques', Program Coordinator, ACM
Ethan Munson, Chair, SIGWEB
Klara Nahrstedt, Chair, SIGMM
Maritza Nichols, Program Coordinator, ACM
Scott Owen, President, SIGGRAPH
David Pennock, Chair, SIGeCOM
Darren Ramdin, Finance, ACM
Pat Ryan, COO, ACM
Hanan Samet, Chair, SIGSPATIAL
Andrew Sears, Chair, SIGACCESS

Sung Shin, Chair, SIGAPP
Janice Sipior, Chair, SIGMIS
Mark Stockman, Chair, SIGITE
Ricky Sward, Chair SIGAda
Gerrit Van der Veer, President, SIGCHI
Philip Wadler, Chair, SIGPLAN
John White, CEO, ACM
Darrell Whitley, Chair, SIGEVO
Carey Williamson, Chair, SIGMETRICS
Alexander Wolf, SGB EC Past Chair, ACM Treasurer
Osmar Zaiane, Treasurer, SIGKDD

1.0 Welcome

1.1 Welcome, Introductions (Hanson, Sears)

1.2 Welcome, ACM President (Chesnais)

Alain Chesnais expressed his welcome to all attendees and explained why, for him, attending an SGB meeting feels like coming home. He reviewed his past roles as SGB Chair and past SIGGRAPH President. He explained his interest in how things have changed since the economic downturn and how one of ACM's strengths of that the SIGS are allowed to be somewhat autonomous in trying new ways of doing things. The flexibility that ACM may apply to one SIG by trying a new approach often results in an improvement carried over throughout other SIGs.

2.0 Report from ACM CEO (White):

John White explained that he would like to provide a sense of what is happening within ACM through a review of membership, finances, priorities and initiatives to conclude with internationalization efforts.

January 2011 put ACM's membership level over 100,000 which reflects a growth in international members. This year, the SIGs project a \$1.6 million net which is a \$2 million swing from 2010. This is attributed to better collective conference revenue management. Usually, when conference revenue goes down expenses reduce as well, but this year revenues are flat and expenses went down. Conference revenues were positive in 2010, just not enough. SIG operations are always a negative number. ACM sponsors 100 -150 conferences and workshops which are dominated by the Big Five. In 2011 the Big Five, are comprised of SC, SIGGRAPH, SIGGRAPH Asia, SIGCHI and DAC and are trending up. In 2010, \$2.3 million was distributed to SIGs in DL revenue. In 2011, \$2.5 million will be distributed. ACM is solid and healthy. We are an interesting organization because of our 36 SIGs.

International initiatives:

ACM is active in India, China, Europe and now South America. In China we signed a joint membership MOU with CCF (China Computer Federation) which granted 15,000 Chinese computer scientists ACM membership. This agreement allows us to reach the Chinese community and to publish in China. In India, we are refining our business model. ACM is now registered as a legal entity there which allows chapters to operate more smoothly. This impacts our goals to hold more research conferences there and help increase the number of graduates who are ready for careers in Computer Science which is currently at 10%. In Europe we have a strong Council and focus. We have 16,000 members but not as many chapters as we would like. We are working on creating visibility with ACM. ICT 2010 was held in Brussels and sponsored by the European Commission Information Society. We are working on building South American membership and chapters. We have more work to do there. However, we have made inroads with establishing a relationship with the Brazilian Computing Society.

Celebrating Alan Turing 2012:

ACM will participate in celebrating the Turing Centenary, to honor the life of Alan Turing and his impact on Computer Science. Some SIGs have already expressed their interest in contributing. We are asking all SIGs to work together to collaborate on making a contribution. A one day event with former Turing Award winners has been proposed. Additional ideas may be combining an award banquet with a celebration. If there are other SIGs who are interested in getting involved, please send John White an email.

The Policy Front:

We have two areas concerning policy. USACM and the Education Council. Our Education Policy builds off of the momentum behind our collaboration with the Computer Science Teachers Association to assess the state of Computer Science Education as seen in the interactive report "Running on Empty." We are increasing awareness through programs like CS Week which occurred in December 2010. Our goal was to make it a much bigger deal than it has been previously with more visibility and more events to advocate for Computer Science Education. SIGCSE is focused on these fronts as well.

New Products:

We have many products and services to help members including the new Digital Library, the books program, Learning Paths and Tech Packs. Doug Terry created a Tech Pack on Cloud Computing which offers an example of how Tech Packs paint a picture of one area of computer science. "Learning Paths" came out of professional development committee with corporate trainers. The idea is to get top products with technologies to help ACM members to get up to speed with particular technologies. We have great hopes of serving practitioners this way.

Conclusion:

In a nut shell, there is a lot going on with the 36 SIGs and at ACM in general.

Questions/Comments:

Osmar Zaiane: You mention that ACM is growing by 600 members a month; that is a big number.

John White: This is an average. It may be as little as 80-100 a month at times.

Erik Altman: Could we cut the membership fees to encourage membership?

John White: We have a leveled membership structure – what drives membership is awareness of ACM and the benefits that come with membership.

Erik Altman: High School Computer Science Education standards in the US are low – is it better in Shanghai?

John White: There are areas where Computer Science is embedded in elementary Education. Israel is an example. Israel follows ACM's curriculum model very well. We are working with areas like the UK, where, unlike Israel, there is a declining interest in Computer Science Education.

Barbara Boucher Owens: I wonder if SIGCSE could have a greater presence there?

Gerrit Van der Veer: There are several issues in Europe where having a legal body created would be helpful.

John White: This has been brought up and we are researching the issue. Gerrit

Van der Veer: We need to also consider VAT.

3.0 Viability Reviews:

3.1 Viability Review: SIGCHI (Gerrit Van der Veer)

The State of the SIG since 2007: We have a stable membership with 4,000-5,000 members. We sponsor 10-12 conferences a year as well as 16-20 in-coop conferences. We have 36 local chapters including 3 student chapters which, is down from 62. We provide the publication "Interactions" with membership. We have a high fund balance. We may have been too careful in not spending enough of our money or taking the initiative.

Our plans: Increase membership support by investing in building membership. CHI wants to be more global and focus our policy work globally instead of staying within the US. Our Ed. Council is working on reaching out to build membership. We are willing to spend responsibly on this. We overlap with other SIGs and have mutually developed. We follow each other's calendars of events and attend other conferences. We want to be involved in South East Asia. We try to be involved in Public Policy and support specialized communities. We have created a plan to form subcommittees and help them develop and reach their own goals.

Major Challenges: Our issue with losing chapters is real. In response to having lost chapters, we are hosting conferences in regions where there have been no similar conferences. Our benefits have been diminishing over the years so we

are looking into increasing the benefits. Our tutorials will be lost. Our financial model may be difficult to understand. We will work with ACM staff to better highlight our benefits. Our submissions have exploded – we accept 50% papers and notes. We have a thorough process of acceptance. The increase in acceptance results from an increase in the submission rate. We have a lot of challenges, but these are not major challenges.

Questions/Comments:

Phil Wadler: Can you talk about losing your tutorials?

Gerrit Van der Veer: We actually are not losing them – we are revitalizing them. There isn't a need for the types of tutorials being offered and they were too expensive. The tutorial went out of fashion in a way. We are thinking about developing "tutorials to go".

Yannis Ioannidis: We need to find benefits of tutorials – what are you thinking about?

Gerrit Van der Veer: We are borrowing from GRAPH and thinking about "CHI-lite" in the vein of "GRAPH-lite." We are looking at what we can exchange for a lower fee.

Osmar Zaiane: 36 local chapters is fantastic. You have 3 student chapters – are you looking to increase this number?

Gerrit Van der Veer: This is part of our outreach efforts. For students we haven't done this. But SIGCHI draws a lot of students – the number is growing. We try to groom our students.

Recommendation from the SGB EC: The SGB EC congratulates SIGCHI on their program performance and finds it viable to continue its status for the next 4 years.

Unanimous approval of the recommendation by SGB

Action: Frawley to update viability schedule

3.2 Viability Review: SIGIR (James Allan)

Financial perspective: Our fund balance is growing. Professional membership is steady. Conferences are in good shape. We are in the process of setting conference venues for 2014.

Member Benefits and Goals: We are focused on keeping student costs low. One of our benefits includes the publication "Forum" which went online this year. We have reduced registration rates. One of our ongoing concerns is that conferences cost about \$1,000 which is high for most people. We are also looking at the acceptance rate for papers. We try for 20%-25% acceptance rate but since our conferences are small, we do not achieve that rate. We are also concerned that conferences are not in our members home area's – or are on

another continent. We are exploring regional SIGIR activities. 3 of our major conferences are in Asia. We do provide a lot of support for students.

Challenges: Membership is down 10% since 2007 but we are a stable group. Some loss is from the economy and from not having membership included in conference registrations. We are moving toward reinstating that in 2011.

Questions/Comments:

Dave Johnson: What does \$1,000 include in your conferences?

James Allan: The trend is actually over \$1,000 – close to \$1,100. Part of the problem is that we are big enough that the economy-price plans do not apply to us. Also, banquets add \$150 a head.

Bruce Davies: Have you had any concern over losing prestige with your oral presentation if you increase your acceptance rate?

James Allan: We think the prestige will still be there. Opening up the percentage rate may address the concern we have had in the past that the really high quality papers aren't as exciting as lower quality papers which have the most original and exciting ideas.

Recommendation from the SGB EC: The SGB EC congratulates SIGIR on their program performance and finds it viable to continue its status for the next 4 years.

Unanimous approval of the recommendation by SGB

Action: Frawley to update viability schedule

3.3 Viability Review: SIGMIS (Janice Sipior)

We have a healthy fund balance with steady growth over the past several years. Our growth is mainly from DL revenue. We have been fiscally conservative. We have spent on student support and outreach. Our member benefits include the publication "The Data Base for Advances in Information Systems," our conference CPR, our awards and travel grants. Our membership is at 500 and is slowly declining.

Our #1 goal is focusing on newsletter quality. "The Database for Advances in Information Systems" has always been highly regarded. There has been an on-line submission system since 2007. We are working on increasing international content. Our challenge here is to replace the editorial team which is stepping down in September. Our second goal is on conference quality. We have a small but strong core of participants. We want to maintain the quality of the content presented but broaden the focus. Our third goal is to enhance our visibility though outreach, awards, working on curriculum efforts and updating the SIGMIS website.

Questions/Comments:

Ethan Munson: You are not necessarily a small SIG but you focus on a very specific field.

Janice Sipior: I can remember when I first joined - we were 504 members. When we merged with SIGCPR we added more interesting flavors to our group.

Erik Altman: Your submission rate is low but your acceptance rate is 90% - are the accepted papers from the same 30-50 most core people?

JS: Yes and no. The Vice Chair brought in new blood – she has wanted to bring in more diversity to the SIG.

Recommendation from the SGB EC: The SGB EC congratulates SIGMIS on their program performance and finds it viable to continue its status for the next 4 years.

Unanimous approval of the recommendation by SGB

Action: Frawley to update viability schedule

4.0 DL Features (Wayne Graves):

At this point, the portal and DL are fully integrated. We have made it so that the SIG page is also the main browse page. One focus was to let users know there is more here - to increase the context with aggregate views. To do this, we use bibliometrics which once existed in on the individual article level and now they are in an aggregate view which includes calculations.

Janice Sipior: What is the significance of the different size font?

Wayne Graves: This is a tag cloud which shows the different classification – the size represents the frequency of views.

The article list is updated every 6 weeks. Faces have received feedback because we are surfacing this data in a greater number of places. We are looking for feedback from your group. The citation page has become the front door. Prior to this it was the object of entry but only after 3 clicks. We use search engines to bring in traffic through the front door and we work to keep people here. There is a comments tab which we have been seeing activity with.

Scott Owens: How do you control the comments?

Wayne Graves: We have a screening process. So far we have seen that “Q” magazine has had a lot of comments.

Joe Konstan: It is really easy to move from a SIG to a publication but it is not so easy to go from a publication to a SIG.

Wayne Graves: We do need to raise the visibility of sponsor links – it is still a little buried.

Erik Altman: Is there a capacity to do keep recommendation lists?

Wayne Graves: It is something we have thought about. We do have the ability for users to keep reading lists such as “my reading list” links.

Brent Hailpern: is there a link to Tech Packs?

Wayne Graves: Yes, there is a link to drive traffic there.

Scott Owens: How do you assign priority of articles?

Wayne Graves: We do have a meta-data influencing order by relevancy.

There was continued discussion on relevancy ordering. The meeting adjourned for lunch.

5.0 Publications Board Update (Boisvert, Konstan)

Joe Konstan introduced Ron Boisvert and Bernard Rouse. The Community Classification System is progressing. A task force is looking into the future of "The Journal of the ACM" and making it more worthwhile. Conference metadata: none of these problems existed before when we had paper proceedings and didn't worry about how data was achieved. In considering the DL and Metadata we wonder if we have had service complaints.

We are creating a task force to look at what is there through the lens on the DL. This includes cleaning up what is wrong and reporting back through the chain of command with a set of recommendations/requests.

The task force volunteers included: Gerrit Van der Veer, Patrick Madden, Scott Owens, Darrell Whitley and Brad Mehlenbacher.

Continued discussion of the DL and how data is collected from it and what drives the data collection.

6.0 Viability Review Continued

6.1 Viability Review: SIGPLAN (Phil Wadler)

Introduction to the SIGPLAN EC team as the SIG is team driven. The conferences have had surpluses due to high attendee rates. Membership costs have been adjusted so that the SIG is no longer subsidizing print to members. Membership benefits include a CD provided at the end of the year with SIGPLAN related DL material. Andy Gil's goal is to update web presence with blogs. Professional Activities Committee is working to include childcare and companion travel as a form of support. We are diversifying our conference locations to include Tokyo and Beijing. OOPSLA has become SPLASH – this is our conference where industry meets academia. We have debated the importance of conferences vs. journals. We are increasing our paper acceptance rate and now have double tracked conferences. We have added a new award: The Programming Languages Software Award.

Questions/Comments:

Matt Dwyer: How did you increase the paper acceptance rate?

PW: We simply increased the amount of accepted papers.

Discussion on the history of SIGPLAN tutorials; how they were once successful but then became costly and not well attended causing them to be significantly reduced.

Recommendation from the SGB EC: The SGB EC congratulates SIGPLAN on their program performance and finds it viable to continue its status for the next 4 years.

Unanimous approval of the recommendation by SGB

Action: Frawley to update viability schedule

6.2 Viability Review: SIGSPATIAL (Hanan Samet)

Our fund balance is at 170K after 3 years. We have tried to keep our fees modest and do not understand why so few students take advantage of the low rates. We found positive results from cutting costs at conferences. An example is buying far fewer bottles of bottled water and having conservative banquet orders. In the end, we have plenty of food and water at conferences while reducing our costs.

Our audiences like single-track conferences and that they attract key-note speakers. We have set a conference date so that it reoccurs consistently. Our ongoing challenges are to keep fees low.

Recommendation from the SGB EC: The SGB EC congratulates SIGSPATIAL on their program performance and finds it viable to continue its status for the next 4 years.

Unanimous approval of the recommendation by SGB

Action: Frawley to update viability schedule

7.0 SIG Proposal Report

7.1 SIGHPC Proposal – Under Review (Gerrit Van der Veer)

We have a proposal for a SIGHPC (High Performance Computing). The SGB has reviewed the proposal and discussed the possibility of this new SIG and have asked the proposers to come back with a set of bylaws, a budget and their thoughts on how this SIG would work with SIGARCH on SC as appropriate.

Recommendation from the SGB EC: The SGB EC recommends pursuing the chartering of a new SIG on HPC.

Ethan Munson: Second

Eric Altman: There is also ICS (International Conference on Super Computing).
Phil Wadler: We recognize that there might be overlap but would like to support the sponsorship.

Doug Berger (by phone): I support the creation of the SIG if it increases ACM membership and does not cannibalize other SIG membership.

Vote: Passed

7.2 Other SIG Proposals (Gerrit Van der Veer)

LOG: Although it is still early, we would like to let you know that we are also considering a SIG called SIGLOG. We will follow-up on the results of our considerations at a later time.

SGB EC: There is no recommendation at the moment, just a notification about the consideration to become a new SIG.

Phil Wadler: SIGPLAN would like to be involved in this discussion.

8.0 SGB EC Administrative Report

8.1 Task Force Report on SGB EC Restructure (Alex Wolf)

It was suggested that the SGB EC look at realigning the SGB EC roles to better accommodate the current needs of the SGB.

Recommendation from the SGB EC: Wolf referenced the report which was included as back-up and reported that the SGB EC recommended accepting the outlined structure to begin with the new EC on 7/1/11.

Unanimous approval of the recommendation by the SGB.

8.2 Task Force Report on Visa Issues (Barbara Boucher Owens)

At the last SGB meeting, there was a concern that conference attendees have had trouble getting Visa sponsorship. We put out a "Survey Monkey" to assess the impact of the issue. (Highlighting comments from survey) Of all ACM conferences held last year, there were an insignificant number of problems and those were a result of issues outside of ACM's control.

Questions/Comments:

Osmar Zaiane: The biggest problem is with those students who are already in the US with a Visa and need to leave to attend an international conference only to find that they have troubles returning.

Ethan Munson: We don't have a clear statistical report on the significance.

Patrick Madden: There will always be tensions about this. There are situations where there is a narrow window between paper acceptance and the Visa application. If the Visa office closes before the paper is received – there is nothing we can do about this.

Vicki Hanson: We looked at this to see if there was anything that ACM could do.

Barbara Boucher Owens: There will always be tension concerning this.

Bruce Davies: I was one of the people who had trouble getting a Visa to go to India. There was confusion because the conference wanted to produce the letter however ACM thought it should provide it which I agree with.

James Allan: One thing that ACM could do better, and it makes a lot of sense, is to send an automatic email or letter replying to the request as an acknowledgement of the request.

Ethan Munson: It is important for organizers to know that it is not easy to get Visas. They should make sure to ask the Visa question. Americans should not assume that they do not need one to travel abroad.

Vicki Hanson: Thank you to Alex and Donna for help with the EC restructuring recommendations and to Barbara on the Visa research.

9.0 Best Practices Session (All):

Andrew Sears: There is an ongoing effort for volunteer development within the SIGs. Are there specific things you do to make sure that volunteers can take on this type of responsibility?

Ricky Swires: In SIGAda our biggest challenge is that our committee members are getting older. It has been interesting trying to encourage older volunteers to relinquish control and it has been a challenge looking for students to get involved.

Bob Haring-Smith: In SIGUCCS, we are looking for some kind of tracking database to keep track of who has volunteered for what – we are looking for the same type of tracking for awards.

Bruce Hailpern: It has been a challenge to find chairs for non-flagship conferences. We try to groom people for PC role. We have critical members on the boards that do essential things like awards – who do you get to take on those jobs?

Ethan Munson: I've tried to create title roles

Sung Shin: Most of our volunteers are not from industry but from academia.

Elisa Bertino: The same is true for SIGSAC

Gang Luo: We are new, we started this year. Most of our volunteers are outside of the US which adds another challenge.

Osmar Zaiane: SIGKDD is okay – we have volunteers in the industry. Our biggest challenge is looking for conference volunteers.

Lance Fortnow: We have a need for volunteers – we have a lot of young volunteers – our challenge has been finding people willing to go to NCF as volunteers.

Patrick Madden: Our approach to this is to give grants to graduate students and later ask them for help.

Joe Konstan: I inherited from SIGCHI a “Google Docs” spreadsheet which tracks volunteer participation - it helps you see who to move up and to not ask to help again.

Barbara Boucher Owen: Program chairs for year X become the conference chair for year Y – we also integrate them in the conference cycle.

Andrew Sears: SIGACCESS has found that the development of students is very helpful. Our volunteer for 2012 was a doctoral mentor from previous years.

Scott Owen: Student Growth – as students move up from team leader to program chair to sub-committee chair, they ultimately move up to EC where we can detect and filter out volunteers who are good at faking it on paper but actually don't come through.

Yannis Ioannidis: We haven't had much trouble finding volunteers – SIGMOD is a flagship conference – we fail in that plenty of people fill more than 1 role. We are moving toward having 2 assistant directors which might give us more structure with our helpers.

Dave Pennock: Having an Information Director helps.

Hanan Samet: We are sort of new and have recruited for 1st batch of officers – what set us back is that it is hard to find 2 people per position – finding one is bad enough and then to have an election – also promoting local arrangement chair – local arrangement chair get promoted to General Chair. Many of our candidates are local arrangement chairs – recruiting isn't easy – it is hard to get people to agree.

James Allan: A lot of what we have done like general calls for volunteer help, never works. Pointed requests work – arm twisting.

Matt Dwyer: Having specific roles helps like Asia liaison – defining roles is a good idea.

Janice Sipior: We have recently begun to target volunteers. We have found that the false volunteers require nagging.

Darrell Whitley: People get excited about moving up in the hierarchy – that helps.

Gerrit Van der Veer: We have many roles – the role of submission head to conference. IS in US is big in Europe is low and other countries is much lower. This is a role to take seriously. A paper writing workshop in Eastern part of the world may generate enthusiasm but may not necessarily be successful.

Klara Nahrstedt: SIGMM developed a rotation since it is important to bring in young people. We develop volunteers at different levels. The new chairs have information on what the earlier chairs did. I always make sure there is representation from every part of the world. On our website we have an associate editor who keeps track of what is going on – they have ownership of the committee.

David Johnson: For program committee volunteers, we look to promote program chairs and so on for office holders.

Florence Appel: We were looking for a newsletter editor and had a hard time finding someone and then ended up rotating and sharing the responsibility. If we anticipate a heavy load, we make plans.

Erik Altman: We have various activities and had a dozen or so people to choose from. The ongoing work of the conference seems to drum up people.

Patrick Madden: Advisory tasks are reserved for those who didn't get votes. The top 7 vote getters are elected to the board and the runner-ups are the advisors.

Vicki Hanson thanked Barbara Boucher-Owens, Gerrit Van der Veer and Doug Terry for their service to the SGB EC. All are rotating off on July 1, 2011.

Vicki Hanson closed the meeting.

The next meeting will be held in September 2011