



2020 WSSA Standing Committee Report

Committee Name and Code: Professional Development and Membership Committee

Committee Chair: Mayank Malik

WSSA Professional Development and Membership Committee met earlier this week. There was a great discussion on professional development ideas/seminars for WSSA members and students. Apart from discussing these ideas, the committee had proposed some changes in Travel Enrichment Experience and Graduate Student Travel Awards to make the process smoother. These changes may include making some changes in the MOP for these award categories.

Here are the proposed changes that committee thinks can further help improve these programs

Travel Enrichment Experience (TEE) Program – This is a great opportunity for the students to go out and participate with different university and industry professionals across multiple regions. Every year we get a great response from students who participate in this program. However, the participation is limited to mainly the students from NCWSS and SWSS regions. Therefore the student winners are concentrated mainly in these two regions as we receive a few applications from other regions. The other concern is the process of reviewing the applications. The committee has to spend a lot of time putting all the applications into one big review packet. If the application process be streamlined, it will be helpful.

Here are some proposed changes the committee is recommending for TEE program

- Reach out to other societies and spread the word about the TEE program and encourage students to participate. This way we can also get some more hosts from all regions. The committee has started to contact the GSO reps from all regions and provide the details for this program
- Select a student from each society if we get enough applications from all regions. This way the students from one region may be able to go and broaden the knowledge in other regions.
- Eric Gustafson - Is there a way WSSA can do the online applications for both TEE and graduate student travel awards. One option may be google forms where those applications can easily be converted to excel files. This would make the application evaluation very easy.

Graduate Student Travel Awards – This is another great opportunity that encourages graduate student participation in the WSSA meeting. There are six awards that are given to the students. Usually there is no distinction between masters and PhD students which sometimes makes it difficult for first year's masters student to get this award.

Here are couple of proposals to make changes in this program

- Split the graduate student travel between Master's and PhD level students - The best thing will be give 3 awards to MS students and 3 awards to PhD students. This may promote more participation from Masters students.
- This is the second year in a row where WSSA meeting will be virtual. The committee proposes to allow the students who attended the virtual meeting for the first time to compete for the Graduate student travel awards second year, so they can still get a chance to attend their first in-person WSSA meeting.

Apart from these there were some webinar ideas in addition to ideas that Steve Li shared in his email yesterday. I will send those details in my committee report later today. However, these were key points I wanted to personally discuss with the board to see how we can incorporate these changes to the two student programs.

Please let me know if you have questions on this.

Best Regards

Mayank Malik,

Chair WSSA Professional Development and Membership Committee