

## 2010 WSSA Committee Progress Report

January, 2011

**Committee Code and Name:** W21 Professional Development Committee

**Committee Chair:** Chad Brommer

**Committee Members, 2010:**

Ward, Sarah	2010-W
Anderson, Randy	2011-NC
Sterling, Tracy	2013-W
Brommer, Chad*	2012-S
Refsell, Dawn	2011-NC
Morales-Payan, Pablo	2013-S
Weirich, Jason	2014-NC
True, Sarah	(2011-S)
Huff, Jonathan	2014-NC

**Board Coordinator:** WSSA President (John Jachetta)

**Committee Members Rotating Off:** Sarah Ward (ex-chair), Dave Horvath

**Appropriate Replacements:** Sarah True (NCSU, GSO representative), Jonathan Huff, Jason Weirich

### 2010 Summary of Activities (through 012/20/10)

- What are the committee's goals for 2010?
  1. The Professional Development Committee will investigate more extensive ways of e-communication for 2011 WSSA Portland meeting.
  2. The Committee will encourage WSSA members to join the WSSA Epernicus group (social media for scientists). Dave Horvath has operated on this site for several years with much professional benefit.
  3. The Committee will reach out to WSSA members and friends to build content, educational information, and examples on the use of Twitter and similar social media on the WSSA Professional Development Committee web page.
  4. We will reactivate the online student membership survey at [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=TM\\_2bvTE7r4ATTMo9ajIKAMw\\_3d\\_3](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=TM_2bvTE7r4ATTMo9ajIKAMw_3d_3) to gather information about student membership of WSSA.
  5. Expand social media exposure of WSSA by collecting video clips of why people attend WSSA (at the WSSA/SRM 2010 Denver meeting) to post on YouTube.

6. Solicit ideas, data, and advice from other professional societies (built on associations with plants and/or agriculture) to better understand the dynamics of professional society membership in the new millennium. Development of a multi-year plan to keep abreast of technology changes in social and scientific communication.

7. Publish collected information and thoughts from the Professional Development Committee's workshops and symposium in Weed Science sponsored outlets.

**List the committee's accomplishments (through 12/20/10):**

- The committee organized, in collaboration with the WSSA GSO, and presented the Workshop "WSSA Workshop 1 - Technology and Communication Skills for the 21st Century" at the WSSA 2010 Annual Meeting. Attendance was 20(10 from WSSA and 10 from SRM). Electronic content from this symposium will be shared via the WSSA website.
- The Committee submitted a proposal for a workshop " Navigating the universe of grants, contracts, and gifts in the 21<sup>st</sup> century" for the 2011 WSSA meeting. This proposal was approved. The four hour session at WSSA, 2011 will focus on graduate students gaining an understanding of funding sources and processes in place to retain funding. Both private and public sources of funding will be discussed.
- The Committee continues development a "How To Guide" for WSSA members explaining the use of RSS feeds, pod casting, Epernicus, and Facebook; this will continue to be posted on the Professional Development Committee webpage.
- The Committee has discussed the issue of declining graduate membership in WSSA. As an initial step to gathering information to address this, we developed an online survey for graduate students in weed science - this survey can be accessed at [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=TM\\_2bvTE7r4ATTMo9ajIKAMw\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=TM_2bvTE7r4ATTMo9ajIKAMw_3d_3d) So far response to this has been poor, and we are working to get more graduate students to participate.
- The Committee screened 6 applications for the WSSA Annual Meeting Travel Awards for graduate students. We received only 6 applications and recommended 6 to the WSSA Board of Directors for funding. These award recipients will be first-time attendees at the 2011 WSSA/SRM meeting in Portland.
- Due to the low number of applicants to for the WSSA Annual Meeting Travel Award and from an increased need to gain exposure in the marketplace of science, the suggestion was made to WSSA BOD members to "share" online page space with other science societies. This space would be dedicated to meetings or other events which members of other science societies could benefit. Linking back to the home society's page. BOD members and President are pursuing this idea.
- What information was posted on the WSSA website?  
See #5 above

- How much funds were requested? How much was spent?  
\$3600 were requested, Dow Agro Sciences sponsored the workshop in Denver, 2010.
- What was the impact of the committee activities/accomplishments on the following: membership, publication, policy, legislation, and/or education?  
The Professional Development Committee continues to be at the vanguard of social media and new scientific media developments. The committee acts as a filter and tester for different media outlets and sources for the WSSA membership. Training, Giving symposia/workshops and online content has enhanced membership. Direct data supporting this statement is not at hand but could be found by looking at the number of social media that membership has joined over the last three years. The number of hits to the Professional Development committee web page is another indication of the committee enhancing the professional lives of the WSSA members. Publications have been online only to date. Most posted or linked to the Professional Development Committee web page. No Legislation accomplishments for 2009-2010. Continuing Education is a core mission of the committee within WSSA. Online content, workshops, symposia, and a constant online presence are all intended to assist WSSA member to learn, share, and mentor their fellow members and scientists.
- What is the current state of the committee's projects and activities?

Listed under “**List the committee's accomplishments (through 012/20/10):** “

### **2010 Plan for Committee Activities**

- Other Goals for 2010:
  - Begin a discourse for re envisioning the process in which the WSSA integrates the society website to archive information from the annual meetings and committees.
- Plan of Action:
  - Solicit assistance from the WSSA BOD, other members, and stakeholders concerning the collection of content from annual meetings of the WSSA and committees.
  - Develop multiple scenarios for archiving annual meeting and committee content on the WSSA website.
  - Present a course of action to WSSA BOD at the 2011 annual meeting.

### **Recommendations for Board/Society Action:**

- Funds requested for 2011: Funding has been received for 2011 annual meeting.
- Other requests for the Board: Investigate the concept of sharing time/space on other science society's web pages as well as on the WSSA page. Details listed above and available upon request.

**PROPOSAL FOR BOD of WSSA**  
**2011 Annual WSSA Meeting, Portland, Oregon**

Title: Exposure Sharing, New Media Using Professional Societies.

Proposal: Increase WSSA exposure amongst professional science societies by implementing a brand sharing policy on WSSA websites with other professional societies, provided they share with site space with WSSA. This is a mechanism to greatly increase the number of graduate/undergraduate students would apply for our annual meeting travel award and other incentives to attend the annual meeting.

Targets are scientists from all walks of life and future scientists.

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Justification and Objectives.

WSSA is under-exposed in the realm of professional societies in North America. WSSA should attract more scientists who are members of other societies to attend or become members of WSSA. This is also a mechanism to facilitate the attendance of WSSA scientists at other science society meetings. Helping to ensure that the weed scientist's perspective is represented at other society meetings.

The WSSA would contact the governing bodies of agricultural research/plant science societies which meet in North America. We, the WSSA, would ask to have a place on the front page of the society's web site which would redirect the user to a page on the WSSA web site.

The page on the WSSA web site would be used to explain the WSSA's mission and to showcase a topic or annual meeting that would be of interest to non-WSSA members. These may include a symposium, invasive weed week, photos, education items, or newsworthy issues dealing with weeds (new herbicide tolerant weeds?).

The partnering societies will do the same.

The WSSA takes the chance that its members would not move to solely meet with other science societies. The other societies take the same chance that their members would not permanently leave to be members of other societies. There will be some WSSA members who will choose to attend a meeting other than the WSSA some years. The gamble is that more non-WSSA members will attend WSSA annual meetings, publish papers in WSSA journals, or in some way contribute to the WSSA than current members would leaving the WSSA.

The new look of the WSSA page would involve some thumbnails of the societies we are partnering with in an effort to "preach to the choir" of currently engaged scientists. There can not be much to fear concerning more lateral movement of scientists from one meeting to another. There is much to gain in having young scientists or graduate/undergraduate students attend a WSSA meeting. These new scientists have a high likelihood to return provided there was ample scientific, professional, and personal benefit from attending the annual meeting.