**VP Electronic Presence**
Report to the 2007 Summer Meeting of the Policy Council
Submitted by Bob Eberlein, July 9, 2007

**Web Submission System**

The system continues to perform reasonably well in supporting the conference and some other operations such as electronic voting by the PC. We do run into problems from time to time and some can be fixed while others (session scheduling this year and last) are worked around. There are a number of activities such as session scheduling that are only done once a year and when they are being done they need to be completed right away. These make for a long process of improvement, but things are getting better.

**Electronic Communication**

We have been using the policy council forum as well as the email discussion list for communication and both seem to be somewhat lacking. Part of the problem, of course, is that using asynchronous communication makes it very difficult to tell how people are feeling. On the other hand, when people are not present at a meeting it is also difficult to tell how they are feeling. This is part of the discussion item on electronic voting and the winter policy council meeting.

**Electronic Voting**

The system for electronic voting functions well to record votes but lacks flexibility. We also have not properly defined the rules regarding electronic voting.

**Web Sites and Mailing Lists**

The Society's web site is now hosted by an ISP and we are able to provide a web site and mailing list to all Chapters and SIGS. Slowly these are being populated, though old sites and lists continue to be used. The cost of providing this service is about $100 per month and we do get more consistent performance than we were getting when the University Albany was hosting the site.

On the todo list is to set up a Wiki – probably one for the Society that can be used by Chapters, SIGS and anyone else who wants to.

**Publication of Conference Proceedings**

Starting with the 2006 conference we are no longer creating a physical CD of the conference proceedings. Instead we create a CD, assign it a ISBN number and then make an ISO image of that CD that can be downloaded from the website (the address for this is ftp://systemdynamics.org/sds_2006.iso). Anyone wanting a CD can then use this to create their own. Again this is part of the effort to make more publications freely available.

**Bibliography and Past Proceedings**

The Bibliography is now being presented as free of charge for all people and libraries. In addition we are putting up some of the past proceedings by scanning the papers.

**Online Model Repository**

No progress, but this is still on the to-do list.

**Winter Meeting and Electronic Voting – Discussion Item**

Out ability to make effective use of the electronic meeting format seems to be somewhat limited. Response is sporadic to issues that are raised on the mailing list and participation in the discussion forum has been limited.

I have a rough proposal for dealing with this, though I put it forward more as a basis for discussion than a firm idea of how we should proceed:

1. Stop using the discussion forum.
2. Upgrade the conference submission system to allow for posting of reports, and thereby the generation of an archival report page (much like we do conference proceedings).
3. Enhance the electronic voting system to notify all PC members automatically when a motion is made and remind them about voting.
4. Use the policy council email list for discussion of motions and other issues.
5. Add in a non-binding motion option. This would be a mechanism to find out if people agree or disagree with a position, but not have the force of a formal motion. It provides a way to find out how many people are paying attention, and in alignment with a position.
6. Conduct the Winter PC meeting in person, preparing and posting reports in advance, but do not vote on any items during the meeting.
7. Immediately after the Winter meeting, or before if timing or sequencing call for it, vote electronically on motions that have been raised and should be dealt with before the Summer meeting.
8. Formalize the rules around electronic voting, allowing the President to recognize motions and control the timeframe and sequencing of voting.