Report VP Member services, Policy Council Meeting Winter 2010

(Updated from version 24 December 2010)

Since the Policy Council Meeting last summer there are four initiatives to report on:

1. the SIG/Chapter representatives meeting at the Seoul conference;
2. the conference survey of the Seoul conference;
3. develop a case repository;
4. a proposal to conduct a focus group with (potential) members of the SD Society at the UK Chapter meeting;
5. a proposal by Ed Gallaher to start a Biomedical SIG.

A report on the SIG/ Chapter meeting is enclosed in a separate document. The main conclusions are the following:

- The SIG/ Chapter representatives express concern over the proposal to choose conference locations on the basis of a three year cycle with fixed sites.
- The Society should try to clarify the expectations of the SIGs/ Chapters and the support which can be expected from the Society.
- The Society should assign a budget for SIG/ Chapter activities. The budget is to be assigned only on the condition that a written proposal for spending the money has been approved and that results of activities are reported.

The results of the conference survey are reported in a separate document. The 84 respondents evaluate all elements of the 2010 conference positively.

On the third topic, I have been looking into creating an online case repository consisting of descriptions of successful use of SD in applied and research settings. In an email on the March 2010 SD Newsletter, this repository was announced to Society members. A template to publish cases on the Society website has been discussed with the VP Electronic presence (Bob Eberlein).I mailed Chapter and SIG representatives around the time of the conference on additional cases and had several reactions. John Sterman also suggested cases. In total there are now 19 case descriptions of half to a full page each. I would like to encourage everyone to take a brief look at these cases and email any comments or suggestions you might have. I have two main questions on the current version of the case repository. First, most of these I wrote myself, on the basis of the papers suggested by John and SIG/ Chapter representatives. I summarized and changed the text but I am not sure if we need to consider copyrights before we could place these on the Society website. Second, I suppose we should give the authors of the papers I used as a basis

for the case descriptions a chance to revise the text. Any reactions to these questions would be welcome.

In the last few weeks a discussion between Jack Homer, Kim Warren, Bob Eberlein, David Lane and Roberta Spencer provided more suggestions on how to take this forward. Bahri Khairul has volunteered to continue adding cases and he and I have started cooperating on this. Additional cases are being sent in by SIG and Chapter representatives.

The fourth subject follows from the ongoing concern of the Society Office to raise (low-income) membership. In order to increase membership it would be beneficial to know what (potential) members expect from a membership and what makes them decide to join the Society. Ashley Carreras and Parmjit Kaur, who are with De Montfort University in Leicester (UK) have conducted a focus group with the UK OR Society on these questions. Focus group meetings are part of their ongoing research. Ashley and Parmjit could facilitate a focus group meeting at the UK Chapter meeting on 10 and 11 February 2011 at London South Bank University. In principle they are willing to facilitate this meeting for free but if possible the Society could reimburse travel costs. My proposal is to contact the organizers of the UK Chapter meeting and see if there is room in the program for this event and if the required respondents (potential members and members) are at the meeting and likely to participate. In addition, I propose that the Society reimburses travel costs for Ashley and Parmjit.

After discussion of this topic with organizers of the UK Chapter meeting it turned out that the time available for this meeting is rather short. In addition, few potential SD Society members would attend the meeting. We therefore decided not to follow up on this idea at the moment.

Finally, Ed Gallaher contacted the SD Society Office on starting up a Biomedical SIG. He proposes to organize a session on this topic at the Washington conference. The Office and I offered our assistance in taking this further.

Etiënne Rouwette, 13 February 2011