

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

[Recording](#)

[Chat](#)

[Transcript 1 & 2](#)

Attendees

Voting: Asmeret Naugle, Allyson Beall King, Inge Bleijenbergh, Eliot Rich, Raafat Zaini, Bob Eberlein, Scott Rockart, Jeroen Struben, Mohammad Jalali, Burcu Tan Erciyes, Diana Fisher, Irene Headen, Willem Auping, Hyunjung Kim, Bunmi Falebita.

Non-voting: Ignácio Martínez-Moyano, Jorge-Andrick Parra-Valencia, Meagan Colvin, Raquel Buzogany, Rebecca Niles

Agenda

- 0:10 Welcome & Introduction (Asmeret)
- 0:05 Motions (Asmeret)
- 0:10 DMA Fund (Bob)
- 0:20 VP Membership Update - DMA Scholarship Proposal (Inge)
- 0:45 Strategic Planning (Asmeret)
- Adjournment

Minutes

President, Asmeret Bier Naugle, convened the meeting and introduced the agenda.

Secretary, Bob, moved to approve the April 2025 PC minutes. Diana seconded. Motion passed.

VP Finance, Eliot, moved to approve an increase in the 2025 Budget for the JWF award from \$5,200 to \$12,000 to allow for a second JWF Award to be given. Discussion included questions on the recurrence of this amendment. Allyson seconded. One abstention (Bob). Motion passed.

Past President, Allyson, moved to appoint Willem Auping to the Executive Committee. Bob seconded. One abstention (Willem). Motion passed.

Bob Eberlein, shared the updated text on the Dana Meadows Fund Charter. Updates include 1) grants to individuals engaged in teaching, 2) name change from "Awards Fund" to "Fund", 3) addition of legal language. Discussion ensued on the motivation for the changes, the goal of funding students, how excellent communication could also be awarded - even if not coming from students - in the spirit of what Dana Meadows did. Voting will be carried out electronically.

VP Membership, Inge, presented an update to the Dana Meadows Scholar Fund Proposal. She also presented alternatives considered in the process with pros and cons: increase conference scholarships, social impact loans, and translation funds. Inge also detailed the selection procedure including Eligibility & Application Requirements, Scoring, and Selection Committee. During the discussion, Eliot raised the question of how the progress of the student would be tracked, and sought clarification on eligibility

criteria—specifically referencing the requirement of taking extensive, though not clearly defined, coursework and writing a master's thesis. Sterman proposed that the existing award committee should oversee the selection process, while Bob argued in favor of creating two separate committees. Jeroen asked and Inge confirmed that the scholarship is needs-based and that financial need is not just a consideration but a fundamental requirement. He also inquired about the frequency of the award. Rebecca asked whether a conflict of interest might arise if a committee member's own student were under consideration. It was agreed that any committee member affiliated with an applicant's university should recuse themselves from both the discussion and the vote. Scott proposed that the program's characteristics be assessed along a continuum of System Dynamics content and weighed accordingly. Diana added that the student's proposed course of study should also be evaluated, not just the overall program. Bob asked about the proposed implementation timeline, and Inge confirmed that the plan is to launch the initiative next year.

President, Asmeret, introduced the strategic planning activity for this meeting: identifying threads related to the articles of organization. Groups reported back.

Breakout Room 1: to identify, extend and unify knowledge contributing to the understanding of feedback control systems

Participants: Oluwabunmi Falebita, Raafat Zaini, Allyson Beall King

Threats (Challenges? Opportunities?)

- Is unification even a possibility given the number different disciplines that talk about systems. Only SD distinguishes stocks and flows.
- Feedback thinking is part of a big tent that people come to from different disciplines
- Loss of value: If what we contribute to the world is not clear
- Dana Meadows communicates stocks and flows in a way that resonates well with others
- Should we be using more AI for communication? Help us talk about stocks and flows in a more accessible language

Breakout Room 2: to promote the design of structures and policies to improve the behavior of such [feedback control] systems

Participants: Bob, Burcu, Meagan

Threats

- Artificial Intelligence may obsolete everything we have ever done.
- Resistance to change
 - Political will to look at things from system point of view may be lacking.
 - Alternative facts.
 - Ideological differences
 - Having good designs that are never accepted by anyone:
 - Poor communications
 - Don't believe the value/insight
- Funding to actually do things
 - To the Society
 - To those trying to innovate
- Retirement of devoted people in the field
- People are just too busy
- Incentive are not in place to make changes

Strategic Goals from Room 2

- Expansion of system dynamics and systems thinking more broadly and from a young age
- Incorporation of more widespread frameworks into every system dynamics work.
 - A non biased and neutral view of the world
 - A recognition of things working together causing results
 - The purpose of a system is what it does.
- More publication to the broader public by members of our community
 - Social media and other content in various forms
 - Self publications hints
- Reaching other cultures and languages
 - Reducing barriers to access
- Stay in business

Breakout Room 3: to promote the development of the field of system dynamics and the ~~free~~ interchange of information about systems as they are found in all fields of endeavor

Participants: Scott, Ignacio

Threats

- Competition for attention and funding from other approaches seen as more exciting/trendy (e.g., AI) or more established or readily accepted (e.g., statistics) or easier to learn and adopt (crowd-sourcing, data visualization, systems work that does not involve modeling)
- Difficulty making deep and meaningful connections across areas of application leading to limited benefits of scale and scope of work
- Fragmentation in methodological approaches within the System Dynamics community (software, content of work...)
- Limited access to good work that is proprietary
- Self-censorship or external penalties for work that touches political themes
- Difficulty of communicating benefits of System Dynamics in a way that is compelling

Breakout Room 4: to promote the dissemination of information on such topics to the general public

Participants: Diana, Eliot, Jorge

Threats

- We need an identity to share and differentiate
- General public communications required to grow the field
- Expense and difficulty of getting started while keeping the essence
 - How do others do this
- Conflict with other systems thinking models
 - Pre-college SIG: systems thinking symposium from a SD modeling perspective
 - We need to demo why to use our tools and vocabulary?
 - How does the public understand the field (what's the gap we are trying to close?)
 - Demonstrate the value of the approach
- People look for fast solutions rather than defensible and robust solutions
- A lack of common and easily transferred ideas
- Difficulty of linking SD ideas into consumer / user domains
 - Pre-college SIG: Show what's gained with the SD lens

Breakout Room 5: to encourage and develop educational programs in the behavior of systems

Participants: Asmeret, Inge, Willem

Threats

- Difficulty with government funding, travel makes conference travel difficult, might reduce international collaboration opportunities
- Funding problems - Affordability of small programs, availability of teachers, hiring
- Competition from AI
- Too many "single-person armies" - individual professors without teams, also shrinking programs
- Some people are overly precise on what "correct" SD is - killing new developments
- Could improve the constructiveness of our conversations, especially with outsiders
- People consider discrete event simulation to be "finished" - we need to avoid this, find important new topics to research

Five year goals

- Accessibility of the thinking to large audience, popular media
- Should be known to a larger audience
- Should be in dialog with other systems thinking, simulation streams
 - Hard to find meetings where we can interact

Raafat asked about a wider span for granting the Applications Award. Two groups also presented their thoughts on five year goals. Google notebook LLM could help with disseminating information clearly.

Asmeret asked who would like to adjourn the meeting. Eliot moved. Diana seconded. Motion passed.