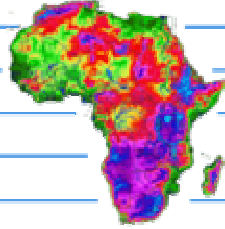


The Africa Specialty Group



Africa Specialty Group (ASG) Annual Report 2005

Mission: To enhance the standing of African Regional Geography and to promote better representation of African Scholarship.

ASG Officers

Chair:

Francis Owusu (2005 – 2008)
Department of Community and Regional Planning
Iowa State University
126 College of Design
Ames, IA 50011
e-mail: fowusu@iastate.edu

Directors:

- Seth Appiah Opoku (Financial), University of Alabama, 2005-2008, sappiah@bama.ua.edu
- Abigail Amisah-Arthur (Communications), Slippery Rock University, 2005 – 2008 abigail.arthur@sru.edu
- Calvin O. Masilela (Social/conference coordinator), 2005 – 2008, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, cmasilel@iup.edu

Student Directors:

- Sarah Smiley, University of Kansas, 2005 – 2008, ssmiley@ku.edu
- Kojo Owusu, University of Florida, 2005 – 2008, kowusu@ufl.edu

Membership Dues 2003

Faculty and Non-Students \$10.00 a year
Student members \$5.00 a year.

Members at Large:

Based on the report received from the AAG in 2005, there are 251 registered members of the ASG (including 104 student members and 147 non-student members)

The ASG Newsletter:

The ASG newsletter is published twice a year, Fall and Summer. It is edited by the Director in charge of Communications, Abigail Amisah-Arthur, with the assistance of the other executives. The newsletter is distributed to members via the ASG listserve hosted by Georgia State University at: <http://mailbox.gsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/africa-aag>

African Geographical Review Journal

The ASG is also the owner of the African Geographical Journal, which is published once a year, in December. All of our registered members receive a copy of the journal as part of the \$10.00 membership dues paid to the specialty group. The interim editor for the journal is Florence Margai. The Editorial board includes: Abdi Samatar, Jeffrey Popke, Joseph Oppong, Ben Ofori-Amoah, Godson Obia, Asefa Mehretu, Mike McNulty, Gary Gaile, Jonathan Crush, Susan Craddock, Tom Bassett, Ibipo Johnston-Anumonwo, Ezekiel Kalipeni, Sam Aryeetey-Attoh and Francis Owusu. A new editor will be appointed during the AAG meeting in Chicago.

Accomplishments

2005 ASG Sponsored Sessions: The African Specialty group was successful in putting together several sessions at the 2005 AAG conference. Listed below are the sessions that were sponsored by the ASG.

- Changing Livelihoods in Africa: Development and Planning Implications
- Health Care Challenges for Women and Children in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Linking Climate Variability, Natural Resources Management and Development in sub-Saharan Africa
- Geographies of Kenya in the Early 21st Century
- Geographies of Health and Vulnerability to Disease

The Financial Report: During the 2004/2005 Academic year, the ASG generated funding from two main sources:

- a. Membership dues (our major source of revenue)
- b. Journal subscriptions from libraries (Our goal is to improve marketing of the journal to increase subscriptions)

Summary financial report from the AAG showed that as at August 31, 2005, the group's account was \$3,890.76. It is expected that a large part of this amount (\$2374.57) will be used to cover the cost of publishing and mailing the December 2004 issue of African Geographical Review Journal.

Future Plans and Directions

At the ASG business meeting held on Friday, April 8th at 7.30pm in the Denver conference hotel, the following were discussed:

Listserve & Website

The listserve continues to function as the primary means of communicating with the members. The ASG has also established a new web site under the supervision and leadership of Francis Owusu. The new web site is hosted by Iowa State University at <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~asg/homepage.htm>

Journal

The interim editor of the *African Geographical Review Journal*, Florence Margai reported on the state of the journal. She indicated that following the advice of the editorial board and marketing strategies adopted since the last meeting in 2004, the library subscriptions had improved dramatically from 7 to 28. She noted that based on a comparative assessment of production cost estimates issued by three publishing companies, a decision was made to go with the Global Academic Publishing of Binghamton University. The new volume 23 was behind schedule but expected to be out in a few weeks.

Further discussions on the journal at the meeting included:

- i. Suggestion to publish more issues (2 or 3) per year
- ii. Suggestions to include book reviews in the journal
- iii. Suggestions to go with an online version of the journal.
- iv. Suggestions to expand the scope and marketability beyond the US.
- v. Continue to involve the editorial board in the overall functioning of the journal

It was agreed that Florence Margai should continue as interim editor for another year, following which a more formal procedure will be set in place for appointing a new editor.

Elections

The next item of business was the election of new officials for the organization. Prior to the elections, Florence reminded member of the responsibilities for the chair and the directors as summarized below:

3 Directors: Directors should serve in an advisory capacity, but to ensure that each director contributed to running the association, it was suggested that each director should be assigned one of the following responsibilities:

- One director should be the coordinator of financial affairs
- Another director should be in charge of communications: taking minutes during business meeting, assisting with the listserv, managing the ASG website and writing the newsletters.
- Third director should coordinate social events and assist with group sponsorship of sessions at the AAG meetings

Chair responsibilities should include the following:

- Maintain visibility of the group within the AAG
- Oversee all activities of the ASG; serve as the liaison to the AAG
- Assist with organization and sponsorship of sessions at the AAG
- Chair ASG business meetings and submit minutes to the group
- Provide Annual report to the AAG
- Serve on the editorial board of the AGR

Following an overview of these responsibilities, the group voted using paper ballots and elected the following people for a three year term 2005-2008:

Chair:

- Francis Owusu, (fowusu@iastate.edu.)

Directors:

- Abigail Amissah-Arthur, (abigail.arthur@sru.edu)
- Seth Appiah-Opoku, (sappiah@bama.ua.edu)
- Calvin Masilela, (cmasilel@iup.edu)

Student Directors:

- Kojo Owusu, (kowusu@ufl.edu)
- Sarah Smiley, (ssmiley@ku.edu)

Planning for 102nd Annual Conference

The next item of business was the discussion of potential topics for 2006 AAG conference in Chicago. Below is the list of session/panel topics suggested for the next AAG meeting, including the names of members who will coordinate these efforts:

- Africa's water supply (Fenda Akiwumi)
- African immigration (Kefa Otiso)
- New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (Calvin Masilela)
- Changing economic geography of Africa (Ben Afori-Amoah)
- Political ecology/ conflicts in Africa (Veit Bachman)
- Rethinking field methods (Kobena Hanson/Madeline Wong)
- NGOs and their role in changing social space (Lance Salisbury)
- Emerging /Remerging infectious diseases (Florence Margai/Joseph Oppong)
- Anglophone versus Francophone Africa: (Emanuel Mbohi)
- Mentoring (Calvin Masilele, Ben Afori-Amoah, Florence Margai)

Plans are currently under way to organize these sessions for the conference.