Minutes of the ACM SIGSIM Business Meeting

Virtual meeting via Zoom

January 28, 2022, 11:05 a.m. - 12:52 p.m. EST

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. and conducted by Kalyan Perumalla, Chair. Andreas Tolk, Vice Chair, and Kara Olson, Secretary/Treasurer, were also present.

1. Welcome

The meeting agenda and slides corresponding to this section were presented.

While recapitulating his vision, Perumalla emphasized that "everyone is important here", adding that there are many opportunities to participate and contribute. He additionally directed attention to suggested actions to increase SIGSIM visibility and reach.

2. Important Announcements

The slides corresponding to this section were presented.

Perumalla encouraged SIGSIM members to investigate current updates of ACM policies, including the Code of Ethics and publication policies, so that "everyone's minds are refreshed". He additionally made note of the ACM in-cooperation conference guidelines, highlighting several.

Clarification was offered with respect to earlier discussion concerning ACM conferences and double-blind reviewing: ACM has discussed requiring such reviews for all ACM conferences, but at this time, there is no mandate with respect to ACM or SIGSIM. It was noted that the SIGSIM PADS conference incorporates double-blind reviews.

Irene Frawley, Program Manager of SIG and Conference Operations, is retiring after more than two decades with ACM and was extensively lauded. A successor has not yet been designated; ACM has indicated that the process may take a while. Conference leadership especially was advised to increase lead time of anything needing ACM attention.

The new SIGSIM Webmaster Maksudul Alam was introduced and offered his additional assistance and contact information. Perumalla emphasized that he himself is still responsible for SIGSIM site content notwithstanding delegation of any webmaster responsibilities to Alam.

Solicitation was emphasized for a Student Coordinator.

Attention was drawn to the current ACM History Committee Call for Applications. It was suggested that the opportunity might align well with the aims of the Simulation Archive. A former Simulation Archive committee member offered that the committee is indeed considering submitting a proposal to the program. Such a submission was encouraged.

The dissolution of IEEE TCSim was mentioned. Perumalla has reached out to some of its community members via mailing list on behalf of SIGSIM to explore SIGSIM as an alternative body for continuing some of its activities.

3. Awards

The slides corresponding to this section were presented.

Perumalla drew attention to and recommended the Distinguished Contributions Award presentation of 2020 recipient Ernie Page, available on the SIGSIM web site.

2021 Distinguished Contributions Award recipient Margaret Loper was commended for her extensive and numerous academic, education, service, and teaching contributions to both SIGSIM and the discipline of simulation. Some selected highlights were presented by Anderas Tolk. Loper thanked all and shared some additional words of appreciation. Several members reflected and discussed some of their interactions over the years with Loper.

The Distinguished Contributions Award committee structure and current members were discussed. Tolk renewed attention that 2022 DCA nominations are open; the Nomination Coordinator is Lin Uhrmacher.

The WSC '21 Ph.D. Colloquium awardees were congratulated.

No student awards were presented at PADS '21.

4. Journal Updates

The slides corresponding to this section were presented.

Francesco Quaglia presented statistics about TOMACS. Inquiry was made as to the increased prevalence of desk rejects, the percentage seeming high even for a journal of its quality. It was noted that there are two kinds of desk rejects: one relating to poor quality of submission, and the other relating to submission being out of scope for the journal. Many of the papers submitted and immediately rejected have been primarily application of simulation rather than advancement of methodology or the field and hence are determined to be out-of-scope. It was suggested that perhaps an attempt should be made to capture those papers, perhaps redirecting them to other relevant journals. Discussion continued that the editors cannot reasonably assess if application papers contribute to their relevant body of knowledge and the appropriate action is to redirect those authors to their application community.

Nav Mustafee presented statistics about the Journal of Simulation, noting that the impact factor metric has now differentiated with and without early-access content. He indicated that many JOS desk rejects relate to out-of-scope engineering simulation. Mustafee drew attention to a forthcoming joint special issue with journal Health Systems, highlighting the desire not to cannibalize papers from other journals and joint issues benefiting both publications. He also discussed several forthcoming initiatives, including a Journal Transfer Service option to be offered by publisher Taylor & Francis, available to authors of unaccepted papers. If a paper is not accepted by JOS, the authors will be offered the option of possibly

transferring their paper to another Taylor & Francis publication, perhaps more in line with their submission. Additionally, Mustafee presented statistics about the diversity of the editorial board, especially noting that they are looking for editors representing Africa and Australia.

5. Financial Updates

The slides corresponding to this section were presented.

Olson foreshadowed that although the most recent ACM projection for WinterSim '21 appears to indicate a loss, it seems likely to not be the case: specifics would be discussed later in the meeting during the WSC '21 presentation. However, Tolk forewarned that WSC '22 may be "even more of an adventure" due to the combination of its being held in Singapore and the pandemic. He prepared that there may be a loss.

It was questioned if the WSC board still provides a "rolling liability" statement to SIGSIM, which includes the potential loss due to all signed contracts with future conferences. A former WSC Board member indicated that the liability clause is still active, shared with the other three financial sponsors. Inquiry was made as to the exact figure of the liability; the question was redirected to the current SIGSIM representatives on the WSC Board to be answered.

6. Initiatives

The slides corresponding to this section were presented.

Discussion ensued regarding the formerly-annual SIGSIM donation to the Simulation Archive, last contributed immediately after WinterSim 2018. Tolk noted that while the members assuredly guide the decision, a board vote is needed for a binding decision. It was discussed that the lack of contribution seemed to be a bureaucracy issue rather than any specific concern about the donation itself. Bob Sargent reminded that a detailed report has been written for transparency and was forwarded as appropriate. An action item was taken to follow up on the state of the donations.

Perumalla described and proposed that SIGSIM support the inaugural ACM-W Africa Celebration of Women in Computing in Africa, suggesting the diamond or platinum level and asking for member feedback. Offered feedback was positive, with Tolk suggesting he would like to see perhaps a SIGSIM presentation at the event in order to increase awareness of and perhaps membership in SIGSIM. The suggestion and feedback was well received; Perumalla said he will move forward with sponsorship discussions on behalf of SIGSIM.

The new conference branch of the SIGSIM web site was detailed, with the intention of "empowering" conference leadership to integrate conference web presence with that of SIGSIM. While aware that many SIGSIM conferences have separate web sites, it is anticipated that this additional location will add to the ecosystem.

7. Conference Updates

The slides corresponding to this section were presented.

Highlights of WSC '21 were reviewed. It was thought that around 500 registrants would be needed to break even, with 100 of those being in-person attendees; there have been 549 registrants, including 205 in-person attendees. Consequently, once the books have been finalized, it is anticipated that the conference will break-even at the minimum.

The conference has received excellent, positive feedback, including that with the reasonable number of in-person attendees, it "felt like a conference" again.

Tolk advised what was considered to be a steering committee communication issue. The committee tried to keep costs low without sacrificing quality. It was originally thought that keynotes would be able to be live streamed, but the associated costs were deemed to be prohibitive under the circumstances. Consequently, the talks were recorded live and made available for viewing online the next day. However, this was not well-communicated, resulting in disappointment when attendees tuned in at the appropriate times only to find said talks were unavailable [yet], especially with respect to the presentation of awards. One possible suggestion for the next steering committee involved perhaps a private YouTube channel.

It was commended that even with the past two years of pandemic, SIGSIM conferences have managed to not post a loss in no small part due to the creativity, flexibility, and incredible amount of extra work that the conference leaderships have put forth. All were thanked for their extraordinary efforts.

PADS '22 is aiming to be an in-person conference; it is unknown if that intention is affecting submissions.

ANNSIM, the flagship conference of SCS, was discussed. It was clarified that ANNSIM is an "in-cooperation" conference with SIGSIM, which does not include financial support from SIGSIM. As an in-cooperation conference, ANNSIM papers are populated to the ACM Digital Library; SCS does not have an archive of its own. This registering is of benefit to both societies, as the papers are more accessible and better indexed, also increasing downloads from the Digital Library and hence additionally supporting ACM including SIGSIM.

DS-RT is planning for an in-person conference. It was supported by SIGSIM at an increased level of 20% for 2021; the conference has requested that SIGSIM maintain this new level of support. Perumalla solicited the membership for feedback. With no concerns, he indicated SIGSIM will move forward with the request.

8. Adjourn

The slides corresponding to this section were presented.

Future meeting dates and general agendas were highlighted and attendance was encouraged. All were thanked for their time.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:52 p.m.

Minutes taken by Kara Olson
January 28, 2022

22 members were present for at least part of the meeting