

## **WACRAO History in Brief**

A record of the "first annual meeting" of what would eventually become the Wisconsin Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers does not exist. However, it is known that the first meeting of registrars in Wisconsin took place during 1927-28 and was called by C.A. Smith, Secretary of the faculty, and Frank O. Holt, Registrar, both from the University of Wisconsin. Since then, Wisconsin can claim on president one president of AACRAO, Frank Holt, who was elected at Cincinnati in 1934 and served during the year 1934-35.

Prior to 1934, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars Bulletin, the predecessor of College and University, did not list the officers of the state associations. In 1934, E.T. Smith of Stevens Point Teachers College was listed as president of the Wisconsin affiliate, and he is generally recognized as the first president of the Association.

The first available documented record of an annual meeting dates from December 12, 1947, when the Association held its meeting at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Until 1960 the annual meetings were limited to one day. They usually consisted of one or more presentations on subjects of current interest or concern, a business meeting and election of officers, and a luncheon which often featured an official from AACRAO as the speaker. The Association functioned without benefit of a formal constitution until 1958. In that year a committee chaired by L.J. Lins was appointed to draft a charter, and its basic recommendations for a constitution and bylaws were adopted at the Annual Conference in Oshkosh in October 1958.

In January 1961 the Executive Committee established a structure that provided for four standing committees in the areas of foreign credentials, records and machine processes, microfilming, and transcripts. In 1964 this structure was further refined when the membership authorized five committees: School-College Articulation, Records, Admissions, Research and Data Gathering and Inter-Institutional Communications. In 1983 the Association saw its first EEO representative appointed. In November of 1988 EEO activities were further recognized with the appointment of a standing committee. As of 1996, the standing committee structure

consists of the following: Admissions Policies and Practices, Equal Educational Opportunity, Inter-Collegiate and Inter-Agency Relations, Records and Registration, and Research and Data Gathering.

The evolution of the committee structure in the 1960s led to two developments: (1) the formation of formal breakout sessions organized along topical lines, and (2) what had been known as the "annual meeting" gave way to a conference format in which the business session is but one component among several elements associated with the conference.

The first two-day conference was held at Eau Claire in October 1960. This set the pattern for about fifteen years. The 1970s saw the expansion of the Annual Conference to include Wednesday afternoon and the inclusion of several more program sessions spaced over the remaining two days. Beginning in 1994, the Annual Conference shifted from a Wednesday-Friday pattern to a Monday-Wednesday format. However, the membership was not entirely satisfied with this arrangement, and a committee was appointed in late 1995 to review the conference dates. After a poll of the membership, the committee recommended that a period from late October extending into early November was the preferred time to hold the conference. Following additional deliberations by the Executive Committee, the first week in November was selected but the day pattern reverted back to a Wednesday-Friday pattern in 1997.

The difficulties experienced in determining a suitable meeting time are not new to the Association. Over the last 30 years at least, various meeting dates from mid-October to early November have been tried in the hope of striking an acceptable balance between the needs of both admissions officers and registrars.

The Association sponsored a MODS Workshop in Milwaukee in 1973. Other workshops dealing with personnel and time management and issues of particular interest to clerical and support personnel have been conducted. In addition, a workshop on athletic eligibility has been held. More recently, annual workshops have been held to keep members updated on policies and procedures related to veteran's benefits.

In 1968, Donald D. Jorgenson of WSU-Oshkosh was appointed as the first editor of a newsletter. The first four-page issue made its

appearance in March 1969 under the title of WACRAOBATS. When Fred Sperry assumed the editorship in the fall of 1971, the name WACRAO Newsletter was adopted and that title has continued to this day. George A. Lehner, UW-Whitewater, succeeded Fred Sperry in the fall of 1972. He, in turn, was succeeded by Roman S. "Steve" Gawkoski of Marquette University, in the fall of 1975. Steve Gawkoski continued as editor until the fall of 1993. During the 18-year span, the Newsletter underwent many significant changes in both content and appearance. Tom Johnson of UW-Madison succeeded to the editorship in time to publish the Fall '93 issue.

In the fall of 1991 the Association published an Admissions Ethics Statement and distributed it to all high schools and post-secondary educational institutions in Wisconsin. This document was the product of the ad hoc Committee on Ethics Recruitment comprised of WACRAO members.

Three joint conferences with the Illinois Association (IACRAO) have been held, the first in 1963 at the Wagon Wheel in Rockton, Illinois, the second in 1977 in Milwaukee, and a third at Rockford in 1982. Beginning in April 1992 in Dallas and continuing each year since then, WACRAO joined with the Upper Midwest Association (UMACRAO) to host a joint UMACRAO/WACRAO reception at the Annual Conference of AACRAO. In addition, official representatives have been exchanged at the respective annual conferences of UMACRAO and WACRAO each year. Possible joint projects involving the two associations are under consideration.

In March of 1995 the officers and committee chairs and some selected "old hands" held a two-day retreat to reexamine the mission and goals of the Association and revise and update the constitution as needed. The revisions to the Constitution were adopted unanimously at the annual business meeting in November of that year. The retreat was a "first" for WACRAO and was organized under the leadership of then President Richard Schumacher.

From 1997 to 2002, Statistics Analyst, Roger Fleming, provided WACRAO Fall Enrollment and Degrees Conferred reports electronically. This was discontinued as information became more available on the web. An ad hoc Professional Development Committee was established. Their first staff development workshops were held in the summer of 1998.

The WACRAO web site was officially established in August 1998 with Glenn Peterson as the first manager.

In 1999, a task force was established to look into the advisability of encouraging member schools to enter into an agreement to send transcripts by fax. In January 2001, the Executive Board approved the policies and guidelines for WACRAOFAX.

In 2001, it was decided to separate the responsibility of maintaining membership records and directory preparation from those of the Treasurer. An ad hoc position of Member Coordinator was established with the possibility of an expanded role in recruiting. In March 2001, Cathy Glennon (UW-Stevens Point) agreed to serve as WACRAO first Membership Services Coordinator.

WACRAO's ad hoc Professional Development Committee received AACRAO's Elbert W. Ockerman State and Regional Professional Activity Award.

In April 2002, Larry Lockwood resigned from his presidency of WACRAO because he assumed the position as Registrar for the University of Iowa. With Larry's departure, President-Elect Carol Lulewicz became President and served the remainder of Larry's term and then served her term as well. Carol was President of WACRAO for a total of 18 months. The longest serving WACRAO President.

In 2004, Connie Russell (UW- Eau Claire) became the Membership Coordinator on the election of Cathy Glennon as President-Elect.

Tom Johnson (UW-Madison), the longest continuing member of WACRAO (46 years) passed away. Tom was a former WACRAO President, Historian; and first recipient of the "TJ Tie Award" for Exemplary Service to WACRAO. He was still serving as WACRAO Newsletter editor when he died in January 2005. Beth Weckmueller (UW-Milwaukee) assumed the role of editor of the Newsletter.

A committee was assembled consisting of WACRAO members and legal counsel to do the work necessary to prepare the Association for incorporation. On December 3, 2003, the organization became the Wisconsin Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, Inc.

In November 2006, a joint conference was held with UMACRAO in Bloomington, MN. This first joint conference between UMACRAO and WACRAO was a success.

In 2007 at the annual meeting, WACRAO unveiled its new web-site; which unlike the other web-site is not hosted by a member institution, but independently by "Blue Host". The web-site manager was Joey Bohl

The Joint Conference sponsored by WACRAO and UMACRAO that was held in November 2006 in Minneapolis, MN was awarded the 2008 AACRAO's Elbert W. Ockerman State and Regional Professional Activity Award.

The second Joint Conference sponsored by WACRAO and UMACRO was held in November 2012 in La Crosse, WI.

With the resignation of Ann Handford, President-Elect, on September 25, 2013; the WACRAO Executive met in accordance with the WACRAO By-laws and made the following decisions:

- Amy Gleason of Viterbo University was appointed as President-elect and will become the next President in November 2013. Amy was the Member Services Coordinator and a past WACRAO President (2006-2007).
- Jacki Van Dyke of Waukesha Technical College was appointed as the New Member Services Coordinator; succeeding Amy Gleason in that position.

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