

## **HSA President's Report (October 2020)**

It is my great pleasure as the President of HSA to submit this report in advance of our annual meeting at ASEEEES. I regret deeply, of course, that we will not be able to meet in person, but I look forward to seeing some of you on screen as we conduct our first ever virtual AGM.

To say it has been an eventful year since we last met would be an understatement. Adjusting to the global pandemic has, of course, consumed a lot of our attention and energy. But it has also exacerbated long-standing problems within the academy, and has amplified the considerable challenges we continue to face as scholars, from shrinking university budgets and institutional downsizing, to the difficulty that young scholars face with respect to finding full-time, tenure-track positions. For our colleagues in Hungary, the situation is even more complicated, and the stakes particularly high.

Despite the multiple challenges we face as a scholarly community, the HSA Executive continues to look to the future, and in this light launched a membership drive at the beginning of September. Conceived by our Past President, Árpád von Klimó, our drive resulted in fourteen individual and one new institutional membership. This may seem a modest increase, but given that we went into the membership drive with thirty-one paid-up individual members, and now have forty-five, I think we can consider this a success.

The executive also proposed a new membership fee structure, one that was passed with overwhelming support by our membership in an email vote conducted in the summer. In addition to covering the costs related to the publication of *Hungarian Studies Review* (now being published by Pennsylvania State University Press in conjunction with the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada), the new tiered structure we have introduced will allow HSA to offer a discounted rate for students, retirees, and individuals experiencing economic precarity, which will be offset by the new supporting membership category. The supporting membership category will also provide members with a convenient way to donate to HSA. If our income increases significantly, those funds can be used to create a student travel grant in the future, an initiative that our members have shown an interest in supporting at past general meetings.

Though all of us on the executive are reluctant to add more Zoom meetings to our calendars, we nevertheless decided to meet twice a year outside of the ASEEEES AGM. We held our first executive meeting on May 28, and our second meeting on October 2. At our May meeting we officially welcomed Leslie Waters as our new Vice-President/President-Elect. Leslie has been an active member of HSA since she was a doctoral candidate, and was serving as a Member at Large when she was elected to her new position on the executive. If my math is right, Leslie will assume the presidency of HSA on Jan. 1, 2023.

We also welcomed Andrew Behrendt as a Member at Large. Andrew has also been an HSA member since he was a PhD student, and fills the vacancy left by Karl Brown when he resigned his position at the last ASEEEES meeting. Andrew's term is also for three years.

On May 10, 2020, I had the honour of writing to Jessica Storey-Nagy to welcome her to the HSA Executive Committee. A Ph.D. candidate at Indiana University, Bloomington, Jessica joins our Executive as a Member at Large. She was elected by the Executive to fill the vacancy left by Leslie when she assumed her new role as Vice President on Jan. 1, 2020. Because Leslie's term as Member at Large was set to expire this year, Jessica's term will last until the AGM this fall, at which time she will be able to run for office in the next election.

I realize this a bit overdue, but I would like to take the opportunity here to express my appreciation to both Árpád von Klimó and Karl Brown for their service to HSA. Karl has been an active member of HSA for over a decade, and has served on the HSA book and article prize committees. Though we miss his good humour at our meetings, we look forward to welcoming him back in the future, and hope that he will once again consider serving on the HSA Executive.

Árpád's term as president ended on Dec. 31, 2019, and before his term ended, he did much to infuse our organization with new energy, and a new direction. As the new president of HSA, I hope to be able to continue the work he started, and continue to be inspired by his enthusiasm for Hungarian studies.

Wishing everyone a very happy beginning to the new academic year,

Steven Jobbitt  
HSA President