

## Report on the 2008-2009 meeting of the Mississippi Philosophical Association

### **Overview**

The 59<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the MPA was a three-day event (November 20-22, 2008) held in Jackson, Mississippi. Most presentations took place in the Norman C. Nelson Student Union on the University of Mississippi Medical School campus, though one keynote speaker presented at Buie House. In a change from previous years, the 2008-2009 meeting revolved around one theme: medical ethics.

Even though the number of students and faculty from the state of Mississippi attending the event was essentially unchanged from previous years, it was widely agreed that the 59<sup>th</sup> annual meeting was a resounding success and an improvement upon previous years' meetings. It was also the belief of everyone that the success of the event was directly attributable to the dedication, organization, and fund-raising of the MPA Vice-President, Dr. Eric Weber (Public Policy and Leadership, University of Mississippi).

The entire program for the 59<sup>th</sup> annual meeting can be found on the MPA webpage: <http://www.olemiss.edu/orgs/mpa/ConferenceProgramF08.pdf>

### **Business Meeting**

The following MPA members attended the business meeting:

Dr. Kristen Brown (Millsaps College)  
Dr. William Lawhead (University of Mississippi)  
Dr. Steven Skultety (University of Mississippi)  
Dr. Steven Smith (Millsaps College)  
Dr. Eric Weber (University of Mississippi)

Minutes of the meeting:

- A) \$10 dues were collected from all five attendees
- B) Members filled out forms for the sake of data collection about the event
- C) Members' assessment of the 59<sup>th</sup> annual meeting

Successful aspects:

- 1) the consistently high quality of presentations and keynote addresses
- 2) having a single conference theme promoted good discussions among participants and made participants feel that nearly all the presentations were relevant to their own research

- 3) having food provided for participants made for a relaxed environment
- 4) having a dinner and speaker at the charming Buie House greatly impressed participants who had traveled from out of state
- 5) providing transportation to/from hotel and student center made logistics easy for participants
- 6) having the event in Jackson worked well because of its central location and airport
- 7) having the event in the Fall had no negative consequences

Suggestions for improvement:

- 1) members of the MPA would like to have more input in choosing the date of the yearly meeting; it was suggested that, for future events, members should be given a choice among a few dates
- 2) a three day event might be too long (though it was also admitted that the program needs to be substantial to attract out-of-state participants)
- 3) in addition to a general announcement of the annual meeting, the MPA may want to send out an announcement directed specifically at graduate students that emphasizes the graduate award

D) Determination of 2009-2010 MPA Office-holders

The following individuals were nominated and then unanimously voted to hold office

President: Eric Weber (Department of Public Policy and Leadership, University of Mississippi)

Vice-President: Trisha Phillips (Department of Philosophy, Mississippi State University)

Secretary-Treasurer: Neil Manson (Department of Philosophy, University of Mississippi)

[Note: Dr. Weber accepted his appointment at the meeting; Dr. Phillips and Dr. Manson accepted their respective appointments at a later date]

E) Members' suggestions for the theme of next year's MPA meeting

- 1) Philosophy and Technology

2) Social and Political Philosophy

3) The Return of Metaphysics in a supposedly Post-Metaphysical Age

D) Members' additional suggestions for the well-being of the MPA

1) It was suggested that the MPA should develop a better email system for (a) advertising the yearly meeting and (b) allowing all the colleges and universities of Mississippi to advertise their philosophy-related events. Steven Skultety (University of Mississippi) volunteered to create a MPA GoogleGroup to serve this function. In the future it will be the responsibility of the Secretary-Treasurer to maintain this GoogleGroup.

2) It was suggested that the MPA continue to pick themes for its conferences that will making fund-raising easy.