

2004 CASCA SSPS committee minutes, May 27-28/2004

Present

B. Gladman, UBC, Chair, retiring this year  
P. Brown, UWO, next chair  
JJ Kavelaars, HIA/NRC  
G. Srinivasan, U of Toronto

Absent

N. Murray, U of Toronto

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Brief Summary :

- Minor membership changes
- SSPS will organize a meeting or summer school in 2005
- INPUT FROM BOARD is sought on desire to do something for the LRP-Midterm  
(see end of Section E).
- Section E contains a discussion of where evolution in Canadian funding structures might improve the ability of Planetary Science to develop.

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Contents/Agenda

- A. Review of History of SSPS.
- B. Membership of SSPS committee
- C. Minutes of previous meeting (at CASCA 2003)
- D. Last year's activities
- E. National Planetary Science structures
  - Relations to MIAC/CSA/JCSA
  - NSERC
  - LRP Midterm review
- F. Plans for meeting/school in 2005
- G. Possibility of DPS 2008 or 2009  
Possibility of 2009 MetSoc meeting

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A. Review

- The SSPS Charter was reviewed.

- Our role as an advisor committee of CASCA was reviewed, and the SSPS's analogy with the Theory Committee which provided a "Birds of a Feather" structure for the development of theoretical astrophysics in Canada.

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## B. Membership

### SUMMARY

7/2002 - 7/2004 : B. Gladman, Chair

7/2004 - 7/2005 : B. Gladman, (backup Chair)

6/2002 - 7/2006 : P. Brown, [Chair beginning 8/2004]

7/2002 - 7/2005 : N. Murray

7/2004 - 7/2007 : J. Kavelaars

6/2004 - 7/2007 : G. Srinivasan

- CASCA membership for Sriniviasan has occurred.

Motion: Accept G. Srinivasan of U. of Toronto as a new member of the SSPS committee. Vote: Unanimous acceptance.

- New SSPS member JJ Kavelaars had been accepted by unanimous email vote in February; Kavelaars will replace B. Gladman on committee end of June for 3-year term 2004-2007.

- Peter Brown will become chair 2004-2006 (CASCA board requested first chair only serve a 2-year term and then stagger three-year terms; however Brown would serve 5 years and his departure in 2007 would coincide with departure year of two others; thus a two-year term for Brown is suggested.

- Norm Murray will finish a 3-year term in 2005. Possible replacements were identified.

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## C. Reviewed minutes of 2003 meeting. (Power point talk given in Waterloo)

Motion to accept previous minutes accepted unanimously.

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## D. REVIEW OF SSPS ACTIVITIES OF PREVIOUS YEAR.

1. MIAC meeting in November 2003 in Regina : A motion was made to the MIAC

(Meteorites and Impacts Advisory Committee, to CSA) and accepted unanimously.

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### MIAC 2003 Meeting Motion

Motion :

MIAC is delighted to learn of the Canadian Astronomical Society's Solar System and Planetary Science committee and applauds its goals of improving coherence in planetary science over the full suite of

disciplines.

The MIAC committee expresses strong interest in a summer school targeted at graduate students in a variety of disciplines and will lend its support to any proposals for funding for same.

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2. The SSPS had agreed in 2003 that the organization of a meeting or a school in Planetary Sciences (along the lines of the Kingston Meetings for astrophysics) was a high priority.

- Gladman submitted an application (in October 2003) to obtain funding by the UBC Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies) to finance a 50-student school on the UBC campus. Because the mandate of the Institute is primarily targeted at exploratory workshops this application was rejected as not lying in the funding mandate of the Institute (even though the Institute's panel applauded the multi-disciplinary aim of the application). In the context of the application Gladman explored the possibility of NSERC and CSA matching funds. NSERC reported the possibility to request Ad Hoc funding for HQP training of graduate students. CSA has yet to respond to our two requests.

- The committee had preliminary discussion of a whether a meeting or a workshop would serve the community better at this time. An re-application to Peter Wall for a workshop would likely succeed.

- The committee decided to explore the idea of a planetary sciences school in Whistler in May or June 2005, with a meeting as another option, either in Whistler or UBC. A planning trip to investigate school facilities was organized for May 27/28 2004, where SSPS would meet (observing runs, field science, and conferences disrupted the ability to meet at Winnipeg CASCA this year for most members).

3. Report: The SSPS is pleased that Scrivivasan and Hahn joined CASCA over the last year, thus making them eligible to serve on the SSPS as full members.

4. SSPS reports again (since the last minutes may be unclear) that the Division of Planetary Sciences of the AAS recognized CASCA as a partner society in May 2003. CASCA members may attend DPS meetings at member rates without joining the AAS.

5. Gladman made preliminary contacts with the DPS executive about organizing a DPS meeting in Vancouver or Whistler in the future (2008 - 2011). The DPS executive was extremely excited about this possibility (first Canadian meeting) and will officially consider this June 6 2004 at their Washington DC meeting. If this indication of interest is approved a formal bid would be submitted to the DPS executive in 2005. (The DPS is one of the largest international planetary science memberships, with annual meetings in the fall of each

year with an average of 700 attendees from all countries).

6. Brown reports that using the SSPS model, UWO has established a Planetary Science research group funded by the Faculty of Science, seeking to promote inter-disciplinary planetary science research.

7. The University of Toronto has two planetary science faculty positions open. The University of British Columbia will advertise one this fall. Growth is clearly rapid!

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E. For the benefit of new members, the structure of the CSA/SEAC/MIAC hierarchy was reviewed. The role of JCSA was defined.

- The ongoing ad-hoc nature of funding problems for MIAC operations was discussed; Brown gave a brief review of MIAC's history.

- Discussion of JCSA. SSPS acknowledges that all space-mission related issues would be forwarded and dealt with by JCSA. As defined by the charter, SSPS is broad-base science driven rather than mission-driven.

- The problems of 'non-overlapping funding sources' in Canada was discussed, as this makes multi-disciplinary research very difficult. An example of a researcher's grant being bounced between two NSERC GSC's was cited. Although an NSERC Interdisciplinary GSC exists, its average grant size is low and switching GSC is extremely dangerous. If someone wishes to have more than one NSERC grant to fund multiple science studies (example: someone who wishes to do planetary astronomy AND planetary surface evolution) then the Canadian structure is a severe handicap. In addition, it is difficult for CSA to directly fund science due to its mandate restrictions. The future development of a vibrant planetary science community in Canada will require the evolution of these systems to all for an attractive research environment for such multidisciplinary research. SSPS is actively brainstorming on this issue, especially on how to create a partnership with CSA that will allow the development of a very strong Canadian research community in planetary science; all will benefit from this. The example of MOST and the potential of NESS are both heartening examples that this is possible, but a better underlying research skeleton will be needed.

- SSPS learned late May 2004 of the new CSA workshop funding program. This was taken as an extremely positive sign and will be applied to for the 2005 summer school.

- At the advice of the CASCA board, SSPS will provide input to the LPR Mid-Term Review within the context of the review.

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F. 2005 plans

- A survey was conducted of Canadian scientists who have expressed a desire for SSPS involvement as to whether there was a strong preference for a 2005 meeting, or a 2005 summer school in planetary science. There was a strong preference for a school.

- The SSPS committee has located very reasonably-priced facilities for a school in Whistler BC. Gladman has been elected as LOC chair. The school population is targeted at 50 with students from astronomy, physics, geophysics, chemistry, and atmospheric science all intended. (Note that McMaster tentatively intends a 2005 institute on Astrobiology, and so this may be a reason to not do this topic at the SSPS school). Long tutorials are intended (3-6 hour courses) in a variety of topics. Great care will be taken in speaker choice and student selection. It is clear that the professional community may also be extremely interested and the balance between professionals and students must be carefully structured. The proposed (non-final) topics include: stellar setting of planet formation, planet formation, solar system cosmochemistry, planetary surface evolution, planetary atmospheres, astrobiology, planetary astronomy. Instructors will be a mix of Canadians with some foreign speakers invited when Canadian expertise cannot be secured. Meeting will be scheduled to be as far separated in time from CASCA is possible.

- Announcements for Whistler school will go out by October 2004; funding will be sought from UBC, NSERC, and CSA.

- The next SSPS meeting is suggested to be the Saturday before the Montreal CASCA meeting.

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G. Major international meetings in future?

- Gladman has tentatively proposed a 2008 (or 2009 or 2011) DPS meeting in Vancouver or Whistler. Indication of interest will be sent to DPS executive June 2004; if this is accepted a formal proposal would be due in 2005.

- Srinivasan is considering a try for the 2009 Meteoritical Society meeting in Toronto.

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