

## **Society for the Teaching of Psychology Task Force**

### **Psychology in American Colleges & Universities: The Nature of the Pipeline**

Various studies have shown that undergraduate psychological science is an important contributor to scientific literacy and the liberal arts, in addition to its obvious role in the preparation of psychologists and psychological scientists. And, although virtually every American college or university offers one or more psychology courses, surprisingly little information is available about the students who take them. Unanswered questions about undergraduate students who enroll in psychology courses include these:

--How many psychology majors and minors (not just graduates) are there in American colleges and universities?

--How many students annually enroll in an introductory/general psychology course in the U.S.?

--When students change majors—into or out of psychology—where do they come from, where do they go, and why?

--What careers are pursued by psychology students who do not go to graduate or professional schools?

--What graduate and professional fields (other than psychology) do psychology students pursue after earning the bachelor's degree?

The charge to this Task Force, building on previous work (e.g., Landrum & Keith), is to develop and propose a procedure by which the various interested stakeholders (e.g., STP, APS, APA Education Directorate, CABE, BEA, Psi Chi, Psi Beta, TOPSS) might undertake a census of sorts, with an eye toward developing answers

to these questions. This is not something STP alone can accomplish, but we can attempt to serve as a catalyst to bring together a coalition capable of addressing the issue.

Finally, I ask the Task Force to consider two additional methodological issues: (1) If such a census is viable, should it be a one-time or an ongoing activity? And (2) Should the census include high school psychology students?

**Timeline:** I would like to appoint the members of this Task Force in January, 2017, with the aim of having a proposed plan available for the STP Executive Committee to review at the October, 2017 meeting.

STP Task Force  
**Psychology in American Colleges and Universities: The Nature of the Pipeline**

Appointed January 29, 2017 by Dr. Ken Keith, STP President  
Report Date: September 29, 2017

**Task Force Members**

Randy Ernst, Nebraska Wesleyan University  
Robin Hailstorks, APA Education Directorate  
Eric Landrum (Chair), Boise State University  
Garth Neufeld, Cascadia College  
Jerry Rudmann, Irvine Valley College  
Ken Weaver, Emporia State University  
Kristin Whitlock, Davis High School  
Jennifer Zwolinski, University of San Diego

**Task Force Charge:** Various studies have shown that undergraduate psychological science is an important contributor to scientific literacy and the liberal arts, in addition to its obvious role in the preparation of psychologists and psychological scientists. And, although virtually every American college or university offers one or more psychology courses, surprisingly little information is available about the students who take them. Unanswered questions about undergraduate students who enroll in psychology courses include these:

- How many psychology majors and minors (not just graduates) are there in American colleges and universities?
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The charge to this Task Force, building on previous work (e.g., Landrum & Keith, n.d.), is to develop and propose a procedure by which the various interested stakeholders (e.g., STP, APS, APA Education Directorate, CABA, BEA, Psi Chi, Psi Beta, TOPSS) might undertake a census of sorts, with an eye toward developing answers to these questions. This is not something STP alone can accomplish but can attempt to serve as a catalyst to bring together a coalition capable of addressing the issue.

Finally, Task Force considered two additional methodological issues: (1) If such a census is viable, should it be a one-time or an ongoing activity? (2) Should the census include high school psychology students?

**Workflow:** Our work began with introductory email exchanges, a conference call on March 27, and the bulk of the remaining work was accomplished through shared Google documents. The most productive individuals are often the busiest, as this proved the case with our working group. Five of the eight members of our task force participated in the APA Summit on High School Psychology Education July 9-14 at Weber State University. All task force members were asked to review this final document prior to its submission to STP President Ken Keith.

**Key Issues/Concerns:** Regarding the pipeline and the task force charge, we centered our work around the following three questions:

1. What do we want to know, and why?
2. What do we know now?
3. How do we/will we/should we seek answers to what is unknown, including the methodology?

We have organized this report around these questions and our insights/answers with respect to next steps, ending with a summary sections of conclusions and recommendations.

### **Pipeline Prompt #1: What do we want to know, and why?**

Our collective thinking about this topic reflects specific questions that we want to be able to answer, as well as recommendations for establishing systems of data collection that would be sustainable to allow for longitudinal tracking.

Here are examples of specific research questions whose answers would be insightful to task force members:

1. Does having AP/IB psychology credit increase the likelihood of becoming a psychology major (relative to those without AP/IB credit)?
2. What is the impact of AP psychology for students who do not take the AP psychology exam?
3. What contributed to your decision to being a psychology major? Knowing this information can help us to know more about our students' interests. For instance, what is the role of teacher training as related to selection of the psychology major (e.g., is the level of training of a high school psychology teacher related to the number of students who ultimately become undergraduate psychology majors)?
4. How many psychology majors come through community colleges? What is the success rate for psychology baccalaureates who start at community colleges vs. those who do not?
5. Who is advising our students toward psychology degrees and careers in psychology? Are there recommended strategies that advisors should be using that increase the attainment of a psychology degree?
6. How many psychology bachelor's degree recipients go directly into the workforce and do not return to further higher education? Go to graduate school? Go on to professional school? Which professions?
7. For those who, after earning their bachelor's degree, went directly into the workplace, and to what extent have they used and found helpful skills acquired in the psychology bachelor's degree program? CAFE has a task force (led by Aaron Richmond) that is developing a listing of the top skills learned by psychology undergraduates.

Here are comments/suggestions related to broader data systems desired:

- A. We would recommend that these efforts become an ongoing (rather than one-time) assessment study. Once the first results appear, readers will begin suggesting other information not captured in the initial study. Given the possibility of an ongoing assessment, a list of questions can be maintained to help guide future research in this area. We would like to know the extent to which former students were involved in co- and extracurricular options during their undergraduate years, the nature of that involvement (e.g., honor society such as Psi Beta, Psi Chi, Phi Theta Kappa, club(s), study abroad, internship, undergraduate research lab, etc.), the extent of that involvement, and the extent to which students experienced mentoring relationship with any of their professors. The rationale: Many of the skills students acquire come from involvement in extracurricular options, not just classes. Involvement in extracurricular options is through self-selection, but if the opportunities don't exist (e.g., no Psi Beta or Psi Chi chapter, or the chapter exists but it isn't very active), students who might have benefited from them miss out. Positive outcomes for students who become active in thriving extracurricular programs might seem obvious, to our knowledge there is no systematic, comprehensive study on this. If we had positive findings, they could be used to convince college administrators to better recognize and support faculty who volunteer their time to mentor students, and more faculty would come forward to establish mentoring relationships with students through student clubs, undergraduate research, and so on. Plus, students who became involved in extracurricular options might likely, years after getting their bachelor's degree, report higher levels of involvement on the job, and higher levels of life satisfaction. If so, this information could help us inform students that they bear a responsibility to engage in extracurricular options, events, and take courses outside of psychology so as to better prepare themselves to acquire skills desired by employers.
- B. The Gallup-Purdue college alumni project surveys literally thousands of college graduates and captures two especially relevant metrics: workplace involvement and life satisfaction. If Gallup will grant permission to use the items, the findings for psychology majors could be compared to findings of Gallup's prior studies for the aggregate of all college graduates in their reports. The "Well-Being Five" includes 10 questions that gauge five types of well-being: purpose, social, financial, community, and physical. The researchers could ask Gallup for permission to use their items. If Gallup won't cooperate, psychologists can develop their own metrics or look for existing scales.<sup>1</sup>
- C. One of the outcomes for Strand 1 at the APA Summit on High School Psychology Education is a manifesto on psychology as a science. That document is intended to be for policy and decision makers in the high school psychology world but it will also impact the next revision of the national high school psychology standards. One area of interest is to know how accurately the national standards also define the learning objectives for the college level introductory psychology level course and how much do the national standards inform the AP psychology exam questions? Are the AP psychology exam questions assessing what students have learned about psychology based on the national standards for high school psychology or based on standards pegged to learning at the college level? Why is this important: The answers to the

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<sup>1</sup> One of our national colleagues inquired about the cost of obtaining psychology-only data from the Gallup-Purdue studies; the quote provided was \$25,000.

- questions that the task force was asked will come from developing reporting systems that do not currently exist, thus the natural tendency to prefer regular, systematic assessment.
- D. Developing a system usually requires looking at what currently exists and identifying what needs to change. In the teacher preparation world, there are rich (and time consuming) reporting systems required by 1) the respective states because schools need the state Department of Education's authority to prepare teachers and 2) the federal government because schools are using federal funds.
  - E. Another system that is in place is AP scores and distributions. Yet another system that is in place is national reports produced by ACT. See <http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/National-STEM-Report-2015.pdf> for the current condition of STEM.
  - F. Another system in place is a database created and maintained by all states that tracks students through high school into college. This is called a P-20 longitudinal data system and this program was started by the Obama administration through the Department of Education using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act money (in 2009) to determine whether changes were producing more college and career ready success of high school graduates. The fact sheet is available here <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/slds/factsheet.pdf>. For example, the University of Kansas houses the Kansas database on behalf of the state's Department of Education. Accessing this database is difficult because Kansas has passed a data privacy law that severely restricts access.
  - G. The questions posed to the task force are questions in which all disciplines are interested. Some of these questions may be answerable through queries to the P-20 databases. A consortium of discipline associations would have the clout to approach the US Department of Education or the Council of Chief State School Officers to ask about making queries of the system.
  - H. The need for statewide coordination of educational outcomes and efforts was highlighted in a November 2016 policy brief regarding the massive need for data coordination efforts in California; the report is available at <http://edinsightscenter.org/Portals/0/ReportPDFs/gaps-in-perspective-brief.pdf>.

## **Pipeline Prompt #2: What do we know now?**

As long as the list is for what we want to know, we are appreciative that there are some data sources currently available, and here we present a quick summary in hopes it could be helpful to others.

- Popularity of psychology major at the undergraduate level
  - National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). *Bachelor's degrees conferred by postsecondary institutions, by field of study: Selected years, 1970–71 through 2014-15*. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16\\_322.10.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16_322.10.asp)
- Popularity of psychology graduate degrees
  - APA Center for Workplace Studies. (2014). How many psychology doctorates are awarded by U.S. institutions? *Monitor on Psychology*, 45, 13. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2014/07-08/datapoint.aspx>

- APA Center for Workplace Studies. (2015). How much has the number of advanced degrees in psychology increased in the past decade? *Monitor on Psychology*, 46, 13. Retrieved from [apa.org/monitor/2015/01/datapoint.aspx](http://apa.org/monitor/2015/01/datapoint.aspx)
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). *Master's degrees conferred by postsecondary institutions, by field of study: Selected years, 1970-71 through 2014-15*. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16\\_323.10.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16_323.10.asp)
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). *Doctor's degrees conferred by postsecondary institutions, by field of study: Selected years, 1970-71 through 2014-15*. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16\\_324.10.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16_324.10.asp)
- Starting salary
  - National Association of Colleges and Employers. (2015). *NACE salary survey: Starting salary for new college graduates. Data reported by colleges and universities*. Retrieved from [https://web.wpi.edu/Images/CMS/CDC/2015-fall-salary-survey\\_\(1\).pdf](https://web.wpi.edu/Images/CMS/CDC/2015-fall-salary-survey_(1).pdf)
- Pathways after earning a bachelor's degree in psychology
  - U.S. Census Bureau. (2012). *Pathways after a bachelor's degree in psychology: Educational attainment, common occupations, and synthetic work-life earnings estimates*. Retrieved from [census.gov/library/infographics/psyc\\_majors.html](http://census.gov/library/infographics/psyc_majors.html)
  - Mulvey, T. A., & Grus, C. A. (2010). What do I do with a degree in psychology? *APA Center for Workforce Studies*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/workforce/presentations/2010-convention.aspx>
- Student debt
  - Doran, J. M., Kraha, A., Marks, L. R., Ameen, E. J., & El-Ghoroury, N. H. (2016). Graduate debt in psychology: A quantitative analysis. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 10, 3-13.
- Career courses (advising)
  - Roscoe, L.J., & McMahan, E.A. (2014). Outcomes of Introduction to the Psychology Major: Careers and opportunities course. *Teaching of Psychology*, 41, 110-114.
- Community College transfer data
  - American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) posts one-page briefs describing data available such as (a) the number of bachelor's degrees earned by students who completed at least 3 semesters at community college; (b) the community college to four-year college transfer rate; (c) the probability of completing the bachelor's degree starting with community college compared to native student comparison.
  - These data are not available by discipline, but provide useful background information on the community college's role in higher education.
- Career readiness
  - ACT (2016). The condition of college and career readiness 2016. Retrieved from [http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/CCCR\\_National\\_2016.pdf](http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/CCCR_National_2016.pdf)

- ACT produces annual reports of college and career readiness. The 2016 report reports that 23,829 high school graduates were planning to major in “Psychology, Clinical and Counseling” and 18,988 for “Psychology, General” (p. 10)
- High school student success
  - The states’ P-20 longitudinal data bases to track how successful high school students are at finishing college and/or getting a job  
<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/slds/factsheet.pdf>
  - Information available from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), available at <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>

**Pipeline Prompt #3: How do we/will we/should we seek answers to what is unknown, including the methodology?**

Below is a summary of the individual ideas generated by task force members. For more global conclusions shared by multiple individuals, see the Conclusions and Recommendations section at the end of this document.

- There are numerous organizations identified in Prompt #2 upon which collaborations could be established. These organizations have already gathered data so they have a historical record and we can always add more questions (from Prompt 1) if needed. Ideally, we would use a system of data collection that is simple for respondents (e.g., an online portal that can be accessed by computer or smartphone).
- The State Board of Education in Washington state collects data on undergraduate students at public institutions. It is believed that these data are more in depth than data from the National Student Clearinghouse. It is also believed that the Washington state data are somewhat lacking. STP might look at what is available by state. Perhaps there are a few states that are doing a good job of tracking student data.
- A Gallup sales representative estimated they could conduct a study for ~\$200,000. Although this may sound ridiculous, perhaps some non-profit foundations (Lumina and others) could contribute to a research fund. Several of Gallup’s prior national studies were funded by a collaboration of stakeholders.
- One possible strategy to reach community college transfers: Psi Beta’s membership database contains email and home addresses of all its members. Psi Beta could contact a sample, explain the study, and invite participation in a survey (or structured interviews conducted by current Psi Beta students). In order to reach non-Psi Beta psychology transfers, it’s logical that many current and former Psi Beta students have remained in contact with psychology major friends who did not participate Psi Beta. Psi Chi might consider a similar strategy.
- Psi Beta is pilot testing an ePortfolio project in California. The goal is to provide psychology majors with a tool to document, reflect on, and present evidence of skills and experiences they acquire as they progress toward the Bachelor’s degree. The APA goals and recommendations from the 20-skills task force will provide the structure to which students as they build their

portfolios. If the pilot is successful, Psi Beta may expand the project to include chapters in all states. As this project matures, it may serve as an additional data source.

Here is an interesting email exchange between task force member Jerry Rudmann and a representative of the National Student Clearinghouse:

- Jerry: Greetings, I am serving on a task force of psychology professors tasked with locating all available sources of information about students majoring in psychology. In 2020 we plan to conduct a census of all currently enrolled students of psychology - undergraduates and graduates. With that in mind, does the Clearinghouse have data on psychology students (e.g., the number of students who transfer to four-year colleges and universities from two-year institutions to major in psychology, and the number of students awarded the BA or a graduate degree in psychology each year)? Do you have, or can you suggest where to look, for any additional data sources on psychology majors? Thank you in advance for any information and advice you can provide.
- Response: Good morning Jerry. My name is Joshua Leake, the Research Center Specialist here at the Clearinghouse. We do not have anything published at this time that could assist you in your examination of students of psychology. It is possible that we could construct a custom project for you, examining the postsecondary behaviors and completions of students declaring a major in, or completing a degree in, psychology. However, this work would likely require around a month of time and a cost somewhere in the range (at first glance) of \$5,000 - \$9,000. If this kind of custom work is something you would like to pursue, please let me know. I can provide additional details, and will gather additional details from you to help generate solid estimates on outcomes, time, and costs.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

As anticipated, there is no entity in the United States that is chiefly responsible for data gathering and information distribution about the undergraduate psychology pipeline. We define this pipeline broadly, including high school students expressing an interest in psychology, students in high school taking psychology (including AP and IB) courses, community college students, four-year college and university students, and all of those psychology majors/minors/students and their pursuits after college.

It appears that there is both pedagogical value as well as financial value in having data available about the psychology pipeline. As highlighted in the task force charge as well as our findings, information about the pipeline can be valuable in advising, policy-making, curriculum development, and student success. In at least two examples, the data needs expressed by this task force could be met with a substantial financial investment (ranging from \$5000 to \$25,000), meaning that there is financial value to seeking answers to our questions.

In the midst of our collective research efforts, we realized that there are already some pipeline-related data sources available, and general knowledge about these resources could be limited. We recommend that STP launch a project to organize and curate the available data sources; this could be housed in existing areas of STP resources such as OTRP and ToPIX. Given the recent focus on assessment outcomes (the 2016 APA SNAP conference in Green Bay, WI) and the existing *Guidelines 2.0*

document, adding this complementary pipeline clearinghouse function to STP could contribute substantially to ongoing national efforts.

There are many unanswered questions about the psychology pipeline (in its entirety), as evidenced in the initial charge given to the task force as well as responses to prompt #1. Now more than ever we need accurate and up-to-date information about all students in the pipeline – but let us emphasize the data needs about **underrepresented**, **first-generation**, and **low-income** students. Our success as a nation relies on the success of individuals working from all backgrounds and prior experiences. Given that there is no national entity currently devoting sufficient and sustainable resources to adequately understand the psychology pipeline, we believe (1) an existing organization will need to “step up” and own this research agenda, which should certainly include meaningful collaborations with existing agencies and data sources, or (2) a new organization will need to be formed, with one of its chief goals being to study the psychology pipeline and create a clearinghouse of reports and data regarding psychology student/major success. Either route will involve a serious commitment and substantial resources to meet the critical unmet need.

## 21. Rules of Etiquette for Executive Committee Meetings

Recently, STP Executive Committee meetings have included guests, which was a rare occurrence during past meetings. Executive Committee members discussed providing guests with guidelines for conduct during and after the meeting (e.g., how to provide input; maintaining confidentiality of meeting content related to personnel issues; withholding announcements of Executive Committee decisions until the Executive Committee makes the information public).

*Action item 2017-A-10-15:* Prior to the November teleconference, Secretary Pusateri will prepare a standard opening announcement for guests on rules of etiquette and will add the announcement to the “Announcing Meetings” (p. 7) paragraph of the Policies and Procedures Manual.

## 22. Updates to the Policies and Procedures Manual

Secretary Pusateri reminded Executive Committee members of action items that require changes to the Policies and Procedures Manual in preparation for next April’s Executive Committee meeting.

*Action item 2017-A-10-16:* Secretary Pusateri will share a Word version of the Policies and Procedure Manual that Executive Committee members may revise using “Track Changes.”

## 23. Fund for Excellence

President Keith convened an executive session so that the Executive Committee could discuss and vote on a fourth member for the Board for the Fund for Excellence. Treasurer Kreiner left the meeting during the executive session.

### **\*\* VOTE 2017-10-19-10\*\***

*Motion:* I move to elect Dave Kreiner as a member of the Board for the Fund for Excellence effective January 1, 2018.

*Moved:* Tom Pusateri

*Second:* Susan Nolan

*Outcome:* **PASS** (9/0/0; Y/N/A)

President Keith ended the executive session and invited Treasurer Kreiner and guests back into the meeting.

## 24. Annual Review of STP’s Mission

*Action item 2017-A-10-17:* Secretary Pusateri will include language in the Policies and Procedures Manual that indicates that the Executive Committee will conduct a periodic review of STP’s Mission during the first biennial meeting.

## 25. Pipeline Report

President Keith led a discussion on the report from the task force on the psychology pipeline. Vice President Komarraju suggested identifying psychology programs that have had success tracking students after graduation and requesting that they share their strategies with others. Keith and President-Elect Frantz will discuss how to continue the work of this task force as appropriate to Frantz's presidential initiatives.

## **26. President-Elect Frantz's Presidential Initiatives**

President-Elect Frantz shared her ideas for presidential initiatives:

- Convening one or more task forces on introductory psychology
- Convening a task force to explore strategies for public relations
- Continuation of the work of President Keith's task force on the psychology pipeline with outreach to APA's Committee on Associate and Baccalaureate Education, the General Psychology Summit, Psi Chi, and Psi Beta
- Review of the institution-based model currently in operation for the Graduate Student Teaching Association and consideration of a national model that involves graduate students from several institutions.
- Institutionalize a standing committee of the Executive Committee comprised of the Secretary and Vice Presidents in the third year of their service to review the structure and function of units under each Vice President's oversight.

## **27. Report from the Archivist**

The Executive Committee reviewed Archivist Bill Hill's work and expressed gratitude for the extensive work that Hill has completed in developing STP's archives. President Keith will invite Hill to use travel funds to visit the Center for the History of Psychology at the University of Akron to explore their archives.

Executive Committee members suggested developing a travel grant for teachers interested in the history of psychology to visit the archives in Akron and commissioning Garth Neufeld and Eric Landrum to develop a podcast with Ludy Benjamin and the archivists at Akron focusing on how to integrate the history of psychology into courses.

## **28. Next Executive Committee Teleconference**

The Executive Committee discussed holding its next teleconference during the first week of December and to extend the meeting time to ninety minutes.

*Action item 2017-A-10-18:* President-Elect Frantz will contact Ian King, Executive Director for Office of Member Recruitment and Engagement to join the Executive Committee's November teleconference and will notify Secretary Pusateri of King's availability prior to scheduling the teleconference.

## **29. Adjournment, Thursday, October 19**

President Keith adjourned the meeting at 2:57pm Central Daylight Time.

# SOCIETY FOR THE TEACHING OF PSYCHOLOGY (APA DIVISION TWO)

## 2018 Second Bi-Annual Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

October 18 & 20, 2018

Phoenix, Arizona

Members of the STP Executive Committee		Present
President	Sue Frantz	Yes
President-Elect	Rick Miller	Yes
Past President	Ken Keith	Yes
Vice President for Diversity and International Relations	Susan Nolan	Yes
Vice President for Membership	Meera Komarraju	No
Vice President for Programming	Angela Legg	Yes
Vice President for Recognitions and Awards	Amy Fineburg	Yes
Vice President for Resources	Bill Altman	Yes
Secretary	Stephanie Afful	Yes
Treasurer	Jeff Holmes	Yes
Executive Director	Tom Pusateri	Yes

### Thursday, October 18, 2018

1. President Sue called the meeting to order at 9:15 AM MST.
2. Minutes from the August teleconference were approved as written.
3. Reports from Past President:
  - a. Past President Ken discussed the **Psychology Pipeline** taskforce, chaired by Eric Landrum. Eric Landrum is now chairing an APA working group Intro Psyc Initiative which include specific themes of Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment.
  - b. Past President Ken filed the Division 2 Annual Report to APA, which includes contact information within leadership, membership numbers, taskforces created and their progress, as well as contracts negotiated.
4. Report from the President
  - a. Update on Presidential Task Forces
    - i. STP Presidential Task Force on Restructuring the STP Graduate Student Teaching Association reported on other ways that GSTA could operate within STP. There were three proposals made, all with their strengths. As we continue with GSTA, we need to think about how to connect with APAGS (APA Graduate Students). CUNY currently serves as host institution through January 1, 2020.
      1. The EC favors the Regional Representatives model which would have a faculty advisor, a graduate student chair, associate chair, and then members from each region. This model could also encourage the development of school chapters in future. It is also recommended that members serve three years, members need to be a graduate student at time of appointment.  
**Action Item 2018-A-10-01:** Stephanie, Sue, & Rick will work on a proposal and P & P language by the November EC teleconference. Tom will look into the most recent GSTA P & P manual.