

**AMINTAPHIL: AMERICAN SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION FOR PHILOSOPHY OF LAW AND SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY**

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NEWSLETTER #2, 2007 - 08

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I. 2008 CONFERENCE

Our next AMINTAPHIL meeting will occur from September 25 – 28, 2008 at Villanova University, outside of Philadelphia. The topic is **Free Speech in a Diverse World**. Sally Scholz, Villanova, is in charge of local arrangements.

Deidre Golash, American University, has been appointed Chair of the Program Committee. The other members are Win-Chiat Lee, Wake Forest University; Bill Nelson, University of Houston; and Helga Varden, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

The committee is hard at work developing sub-topics for the main conference theme. Those sub-topics will appear in the next newsletter and will be on the web site as soon as they are ready.

II. WEB SITE AND DUES

I am extremely happy to report both that the web site has been up-dated and that you can now pay dues with a credit card. To pay by credit card, just go to the web site at

<http://www.philosophy.utah.edu/AMINTAPHIL/>,

click on the Membership Page, and then click on the line with the amount which is appropriate for you (\$30 for 07 – 08, \$60 for current and back dues, or \$25 if you are a member of the Canadian section). Put your name, address, and credit card information in the appropriate boxes. Then click to submit and follow the instructions.

Your information goes to a secure server at the University of Utah. One of the reasons it took so long to get this set up was to make sure that many levels of security are in place. I can't give you an absolute guarantee of security (no one can do that with regard to web information) but you can have confidence that this information will be as secure as it is possible to make it.

The credit card box has lines on it asking for "relevant publications" and "statements of interest". These are optional. You need only fill out the boxes with asterisks for "required fields".

Dues of \$30 for 2007 – 08 are now due. If you have not yet paid, I urge

you to do so as soon as possible. It's of course much easier now with the credit card option.

Payment by check is still acceptable, sent to me at the address above. There is a line that says "Pay by Check". If you click on that, it brings up a box you can, if you wish, fill out, print out and submit to me, along with your check. A copy can serve as your receipt.

III. IVR

As you probably know, the next World Congress of the International Association for Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy (IVR) will be in Beijing, China, in 2009. It is not clear yet whether it will be in late spring or early fall. The tentative theme is "Global Harmony and the Rule of Law." I will send you further information as it becomes available.

Leslie Francis is now our representative to the IVR. She has been asked for suggestions for plenary

V. CONFERENCE PROCEDURES

There was much discussion at the Business meeting in St. Louis about the way we conduct our conferences, and I received a number of emails with suggestions after the meeting. There is concern about a number of things, including the broadness of our overall topics, length of papers, deadlines, and more. I am going to list the basic issues as I remember them in order to elicit discussion. Please feel free to write to me with comments on any of these. I will give a summary of responses in a future newsletter and forward everything to the Executive Committee who will ultimately make the decisions on the matters mentioned. Let me know if I have left anything out that you consider important.

1. Paper Length. Since everyone who attends is expected to write either a principal paper or commentary on one or more of the principal papers, and all this is circulated in advance on the web, there is a lot of reading expected of attendees. This task is made worse by very long papers. Thus, it is suggested that there be length limits and these limits be enforced. An example would be

Principal Papers: 5,500 words (about 20 pages)
 Commentaries: 2,200 words (about 8 pages)

speakers for the Beijing Congress. The speakers do not have to be members of AMINTAPHIL or the IVR, and there is particular interest in speakers from less well developed countries. Leslie would love to have suggestions for speakers. Please feel free to send any suggestions either to me or directly to Leslie at francisl@law.utah.edu.

IV. IVR Journal

The *Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie* (ARSP) is the journal of the IVR, publishing articles on the philosophy of law and social philosophy. It wishes to enhance its character as an international journal by publishing more articles written by authors in United States or Canada. Its acceptance rate is about 30% and articles normally appear within one year of submission. Please consider the *Archiv* as a place to submit appropriate articles.

The limits would be enforced in that papers would not be posted until they are cut and meet the limits. Let me know if you have different ideas about length.

2. **Abstract.** There was general agreement both at the Business Meeting and at the Executive Committee meeting that every paper should have a brief abstract. If I hear no objection, I will go ahead and enforce this requirement. Again papers won't be posted until they include an abstract. I assume this requirement will apply to commentaries, too.

3. **Deadlines.** We set deadlines for papers and commentaries but have made little effort to enforce them. So long as the program was not printed, we added papers and commentaries even when late. And sometimes we have added papers that made their first appeared at the conference.

A reasonable set of deadlines for the 2008 conference (which begins on Sept. 25) would be August 20 for papers, and September 15 for commentaries (feel free to suggest alternatives). We could enforce this in a number of ways:

1. We could simply not accept or post late papers.
2. We could post them but not include them on the program.
3. We could post them but not include them in the sessions to which they are relevant; instead we could have a grab-bag session for late papers, with no expectation that conference participants have any obligation to read those papers.
4. With respect to papers that show up at the conference, we could accept them but not discuss them or put them in the grab-bag session, if we choose to have one
5. Or we could just do business as we have done in the past and not do any of this.

There are probably other options. Please send me your suggestions. We need to find a balance. We do not want to be so rigid that people are deterred from submitting material and attending; but we don't want to be so lax that so many papers come late that it is impossible to read them.

4. **Paper Requirement.** A number of people have suggested that we should drop the expectation that everyone who attends the conference submits something. That would mean people who can't make the deadline may attend without embarrassment, and it would mean fewer papers. In my view, however, the expectation that papers and commentaries be submitted is part of what make AMINTAPHIL unique. Everyone who attends has thought hard about some of the issues and has something to say. Everyone is involved as a participant. I would hate to lose this sort of involvement.

The notion that everyone submits something is an **expectation**, not a rule. No one is refused admission if they show up without a paper. There are always a few who do so, and local organizers are typically excused. There is no problem with a few exceptions, but if we loosen the expectation, we will have many more who have not submitted anything, and I think we will lose the sense of involvement that characterizes our meetings.

5. **Commentaries.** At recent meetings the proportion of papers to commentaries has increased—more papers, fewer commentaries. One explanation may be academic pressures that makes papers more valuable in tenure and promotion matters. It would be nice to have a better mix of papers and commentaries. Commentaries enliven the

discussion and they are shorter. But there can't be commentaries without papers, so we need both.

Please send suggestions about this. One part of the solution is making commentaries eligible for publication in the volume, either as a commentary or as developed into an independent paper after the conference. As I understand it, the editors of the volume now in process have worked on that assumption.

6. Fairness to Papers. We group papers into sub-topics and typically open each session by having the moderator make very brief remarks about the papers/commentaries on the session, mainly to remind people of their content (but sometimes we have allowed each writer do this and it goes on much longer). Discussion then begins.

Since people find some papers more interesting than others, and some attract more commentaries than others, some papers may get a lot of discussion, and others very little. A number of people were troubled by this. My own view is that life works this way and there is little we can do to change it. But if you have some ideas about this, let me know.

7. One Plenary Session. We meet in one big room, in a single session. We have developed techniques for the discussion so that people can either enter a continuing discussion or signal that they want to start a new discussion and hold their comments for later. Moderators keep lists so that everyone, ideally, gets their turn to speak.

This can be frustrating, especially if the meeting is large. Now and then the idea of concurrent sessions is raised. **I am not suggesting this.** I think the common experience of everyone who attends is another strength of our meetings and I would hate to have different sessions going on at the same time. But if anyone wants to raise this, they should do so. More importantly, any suggestions about how to conduct the discussion so that all get their say would be welcome.

8. Broadness of Topic. I think this was mainly a concern about the topic of the last meeting, "Coercion, Justice and Democracy". This led to papers on many different subjects. I believe that our upcoming topic, "Free Speech in a Diverse World" is much more focused and should produce a set of papers that are more closely related. Let's see what happens.

These are the main items that I recall being discussed. I am sure I have left out something or other. Please let me know of any other concerns you have about our meeting procedures, and send me any of your ideas about the items mentioned.

VI. ARTICLES, BOOKS BY AMINTAPHIL MEMBERS

I would like to renew the practice of listing in our newsletters recent relevant books, articles, and anthologies, etc. by our members. Please feel free then to let me know about your recent

publications in political philosophy, philosophy of law, and related topics.

When we mailed the newsletter we used to include book flyers. Newsletters are now only being sent by email [It's a new world!] I would be happy to list the URL for web pages where appropriate flyers can be found.

VII. MORE ON DUES

Once a person becomes an AMINTAPHIL member, we have tended to leave them in our data base, whether or not they have kept current on their dues. We have had no process to pester people who fail to pay. I would like to change this for the recent past so that all members are paid up for 2006 – 07, and 2007 – 08. (I am not going to worry about earlier years.)

At some point soon (when I have the time) I will be going through the list and contacting those who still owe for 06 – 07. If you are unsure whether you paid for 06 - 07 year, please send me an email and I will let you know. Dues for 2006 – 07 are \$30, as they are for 2007 – 08.

One reason it is very important now that dues be paid is that we are supplying all members with the volumes from the conference, and half the dues for each year are needed to pay the publisher. In order not to incur a debt, I did not have books sent to those who were behind in their dues. If you did not receive the book from the 2004 conference, *Intervention, Terrorism and Torture: Contemporary Challenges to Just War Theory*, edited by Steven Lee, let me know and I'll let you know what back dues you owe. I can then ask the publisher, Springer, to send you your copy.

VIII. MORE ON CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

As set up, you can use the credit card page to send only a fixed amount (as noted above). This is the way our University does credit card processing. We will add boxes when it becomes time to pay registration fees (not yet determined) for the 2008 conference.

IX. ASSISTANT

For the last two years I have had a graduate student assistant, Luke Glowacki, helping me with administrative matters. Luke is no longer available and I am now assisted by our very efficient Executive Secretary, Jessica Miller. Jessica is also taking care of the web page. Her email address is jmiller@hum.utah.edu, and she can be called at 801 581-8161. Please feel free to get in touch with Jessica if you need help and can't get in touch with me.

X. UPCOMING ELECTION

Deirdre Golash has been one of the At-Large members of the Executive Committee. As she has now become Program Chair, we will need to elect a new at-large member to replace her. The Nominations Committee is now deliberating on this matter and will come up with two nominees. The next Newsletter will contain a ballot for you to return for this election.