RaAM
Researching & Applying Metaphor
www.raam.org.uk

MINUTES of the 4th Annual General Meeting held at the University of Amsterdam, Netherlands, 18.00 – 19.00 hr, on Thursday 4 June 2009

Present: *From the Executive Committee:* John Barnden, Lynne Cameron (Chair), Alan Cienki, Alice Deignan, Lettie Dorst, Jeannette Littlemore, Graham Low (Sec.), Fiona MacArthur, Elena Semino

From the membership: 27 members (see Attendance list)

Apologies:: K. Ahrens, Y. Aksan, M. Aksan, M. Azuma, R. Caballero, J. Cibulskiene, M. Cortazzi, M. Fabiszak, B. Hartley, J. Kennedy, Z. Maalej, J.P. Queiroz, M. Rodríguez Márquez, A. Roldan, J. Sandgren, T.B. Sardinha, N. Teng, L. Waugh, L. Xin

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the 3rd meeting were agreed as correct (nem con).

2. Matters arising

Re**:** Min. 7.1 To report back on Lifetime membership proposal

LC reported that the EC had considered the possibility of introducing a lifetime membership category, but had noted that there were strong disadvantages in terms of tax liabilities and decided not to implement it .

Re: Min 2.1 Charity status and public benefit

LC thanked K. Corman for her suggestions about possible additional public benefit activities for RaAM seminars and conferences, and noted that the EC could make them available to local organisers.

3. Reports and accounts 2008-9

3.1 The Chair's report (Lynne Cameron)

LC summarised the Chair's report for 2008-9 (pre-circulated). She noted that RaAM was academically healthy and financially stable. The basic systems for running the association and supporting the membership had evolved over the previous two years and were now running smoothly. She thanked all those who had contributed, particularly EC members. The EC had been working to create and update sets of guidelines, available on the website, to aid people wishing to organise (a) biennial RaAM conferences, (b) specialist RaAM seminars / workshops or (c) local workshops. The two RaAM prizes had been reviewed and were to be maintained. A PhD student webpage had been established, information about metaphor

research projects was being collated, RaAM had the previous day agreed to co-fund (with conference organisers) a number of PhD student conference bursaries and two issues of the RaAM Newsletter had been published. She finished by reminding members that all places on the EC would be up for election at the 2010 AGM, at the RaAM8 Conference at the VU University. Details would be circulated nearer the time, but LC asked members who were interested to start to think now about the possibility of standing and to contact current members if they wanted to discuss the roles.

3.2 The Treasurer's report (Jeannette Littlemore)

JL presented a summary of the accounts for the year ending 4 April 2009, noting that income from all sources was £4,501, expenditure was £2967, resulting in a balance of £1534. In addition to this, RaAM's reserves from 2007-8 stood at £6638. EC expenses accounted for £1,615; LC noted that attempts were being made to reduce EC expenditure where possible, for example by reducing the car mileage rate from 40p to 30p. JL noted that future income was expected to be a mixture of membership fees and money from biennial conferences. Future expenditure would increase slightly with RaAM now paying part of student conference bursaries.

JL introduced the two items of business ((i) and (ii) below), noting that, as neither income nor expenditure had reached £10,000 in 2008-9, RaAM remained technically a 'small charity' and accordingly did not need the accounts to be checked by professional auditors.

i)   To receive and consider the accounts for the year ended 5 April 2009 and the reports of the charity trustees and auditors.
ii)   To authorise the Executive Committee to arrange to have the accounts for 2009-10 checked and to agree a fee as appropriate.

The membership approved the accounts (nem con). No queries were raised by members present and it was agreed (nem con) that the EC might, if appropriate, authorise a small payment to the person who checked the accounts.

JL informally canvassed the opinion of members present as to whether they would use a direct debit system if RaAM set one up. About 15 members expressed interest.

Bertie Kaal suggested that it might be possible to ask other publishers to sponsor the RaAM prizes in future years and it was agreed that the EC would investigate further.

As regards RaAM membership, JL reported that currently the association had 113 members, of whom 47 were students, 62 were senior members and 4 were retired.

Action JL

3.3 The Web Editor's report (Tony Berber Sardinha)

In the absence of TBS, LC summarised the details of his report. TBS had maintained and developed the website and the databases, changed the passwords for the upcoming year, taken measures to prevent hacking, spamming and access by bogus Forum members, added a student page and blog. Visitors to the website had risen from 14 per day in 2007 and 14 in 2008 to 18 in 2009 (up to 17 May). This was mainly from European visitors: visitors from the USA had slightly decreased in number.

LC pointed out that the EC had thought the Forum would be closed in 2008, due to a lack of use; however, due to a misunderstanding about the meaning of closed, it had simply been restricted; it would thus be finally closed down after the AGM.

LC thanked TBS for all his hard work over the year.

3.4 The Conference Secretary's report (Fiona MacArthur)

FC presented an overview of conferences and seminars in the past year: RaAM7 at Caceres, Spain, and the multimodality workshop at Amsterdam. She noted that RaAM8 would be in Amsterdam in 2010 and that it was currently anticipated that the 2011 specialist seminar/workshop would be in Brazil, though arrangements had not been finalised. She announced the first RaAM-endorsed workshop: *Corpus Based Approaches to Figurative Language,* which would take place at the University of Liverpool, UK, on 20 July 2009.As regards support for conferences, FM reported that the EC had worked on guidelines for prospective RaAM Conference hosts, for prospective organisers of RaAM seminars and workshops and finally for applicants for RaAM endorsed events. She explained that specialist seminars/workshops differed from conferences, in that they were generally smaller, lasted for 1-2 days not 3 or 4, and were much more focussed on one particular topic.

Gerard Steen asked about the requirements for AGMs and their relation to RaAM conferences. FM & GDL replied that RaAM AGMs had to be within a maximum of 15 months of each other, and have a quorum of 20 members, but did not need to be attached to a conference or seminar; this was simply done for ease of administration and for financial reasons. GS added that he supported the use of RaAM money to send EC members to AGMs at RaAM conferences worldwide.

Aida Zitouni asked if PhD workshops of the sort initiated at RaAM7, Caceres, would be continued at RaAM8. FM and GS said there would be sessions aimed at PhD students, and that GS would update members in the near future.

3.5 The Postgraduate Liaison & Development Officer's report (Lettie Dorst)

LD thanked Anna Kaal for helping her take over the job of PLDO. She summarised her work over the year, establishing the postgraduate database and webpage, and organising the postgraduate lunch at the RaAM Metaphor, Metonymy & Multimodality workshop. She also reported that the PhD bursaries at RaAM7 had been much appreciated by the holders and reiterated that the EC had agreed at its meeting on 3 June to co-fund, with the RaAM8 organisers, a series of bursaries for RaAM8 in 2010. The lunch at the multimodality workshop had been particularly successful and she thanked Raul Nunez at the University ofAmsterdam for all his hard work supporting it.

She reminded postgraduates that more personal biographies, PhD project summaries, and useful bibliographies were needed for the PhD webpage. They should be sent to her to be uploaded.

3.6 Newsletter Editor's report (Elena Semino)

ES reported that RaAM Newsletters were proving successful, though there was a clear preference by members to receive them by email. There was, however, little feedback on individual newsletters, and more would be appreciated. ES also asked members to send in possible Squibs, or ideas for them, plus reviews of articles or book chapters, as well as short book reviews.

4. Appointment of the Executive Committee

4.1 It was noted that there were currently no EC posts vacant.

4.2 LC introduced and explained the four motions (below), which had previously been circulated to the membership, in case members wanted to vote electronically. The agenda item in full was:

1) To reduce the length of The Treasurer, Web Editor and Conference Secretary posts from four years to three. This will serve to reduce the workload of the individuals concerned and preserve the continuity of the EC by staggering appointment dates.
2) To recognise the work involved in creating the newsletter by converting one of the Ordinary Member posts into a Newsletter Editor post.
3) To increase the maximum number of Co-opted Member posts from two to four.
4) To approve a change to the procedures in appointing EC members, to make three posts UK-based: the Secretary, Treasurer and one Ordinary Member. (Note that UK-based does not necessarily mean being a UK national). With motion 3 (above), this will allow the EC to remain within UK law for charity governing boards.

It is accordingly proposed to modify Items 16 (2) and 17 (3) of the Constitution to read as follows. Substantive changes are in bold.

16 Officers and Executive Committee.

(2)   The Association shall have the following Officers:

A Chair,

A Secretary,

A Treasurer,

A Web Editor,

A Conference Secretary

A Postgraduate Liaison and Development Officer (who must be a student at the time of election).

A Newsletter Editor

2 Ordinary members

up to 4 co-opted members.

17 The Appointment of Executive Committee

(3)   (a) The Chair will be appointed for a period of four years. S/he will be eligible for re-election to the Executive Committee after a period of eight years.

(b) The Secretary will be appointed for a period of four years and will be eligible for re-election for one further term of four years.

(c) The Treasurer, Web Editor and Conference Secretary will be appointed for a period of **three years** and will be eligible for re-election for one further term of **three years.**

(d) The Post-Graduate Liaison and Development Officer will be appointed for a period of two years and will be eligible for re-election for one further term of two years.

(e) **The Newsletter Editor will be appointed for a period of two years and will be eligible for re-election for one further term of two years.**

(f) The **two Ordinary members** of the Executive Committee will be appointed for a period of two years and will be eligible for re-election for one further term of two years.

(g) The **four co-opted members** will be appointed for a period of two years and will be eligible for one further period of co-option of two years.

Re Motions 3 and 4

Lisa El Refaie asked if it might be preferable to extend the number of possible co-opted posts further, rather than make core EC officer posts UK-based. LC replied that it would in theory be possible to have eight co-opted members, but (a) the nature of the Sectretary and Treasurer roles meant that they would need to work regularly with UK institutions, and (b) the proposed solution limited the potential costs to the Association of EC meetings.

Gerard Steen asked if it would be possible to delay the vote for a year and for the EC to explore other solutions, which would not require the EC to have a UK-based majority. GL agreed to look into the latter. LC explained that the aim of voting on the proposals now was to ease the election process at the 2010 AGM. However, a delay would be possible if GS wanted to propose this as a motion and it received a majority vote. GS proposed this motion. A vote was taken by a show of hands, and as just 4 people opted for a delay, it was decided to continue with the vote for motions 3 and 4. It was agreed that alternative solutions to the problem would be explored by the EC as a longer-term strategy.

NOTE Voting results

The results were calculated the day after the AGM and announced to members by email.

They were: People voting electronically: 17
               People voting at AGM: 36 (inc. 1 advance vote)
               Total voters: 53

	YES	NO	NO VOTE	Total	Affecting Cons'n?
Proposal 1	51	0	2	53	Yes
Proposal 2	51	0	2	53	Yes
Proposal 3	44	3	6	53	Yes
Proposal 4	44	3	6	53	No

The four proposals were therefore carried and Items 16 (2) and 17 (3) of the Constitution were amended accordingly.

5. RaAM research resources

LC encouraged members to submit reports of metaphor-based research projects (descriptive and interim, as well as final reports) to the Chair (l.j.cameron@open.ac.uk). She reported that some had already been received, but it would be good to receive more.

6. Conference and workshop updates

6.1 RaAM8 Conference at the VU University, Amsterdam, 2010

AC introduced the organising committee for the RaAM8 conference at the VU University, Amsterdam (with himself and GS as Chairs), and announced that it would be on 30 June-3 July, with the theme Metaphor and Domains of Discourse. He announced that Dedre Gentner and Paul Chilton would be plenary speakers and that Lynne Cameron would give a third plenary as (outgoing) Chair of RaAM. There would be six specialist, invited workshops. He pointed out that the preliminary announcement was ready and would be emailed to members and to relevant discussion lists in a few days. Information would be posted on http://www.raam.org.uk/Forthcoming_Events.html

6.2 Specialist seminar/workshop 2011, currently Brazil (Fiona McArthur)

This was dealt with under item 3.4.

7. Any other business

No matters were raised.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 19.00 hr

Graham Low

Secretary