

**Lucinda Huffaker / Executive Secretary**  
**Report for the REA Business Meeting**  
**November 2, 2019**

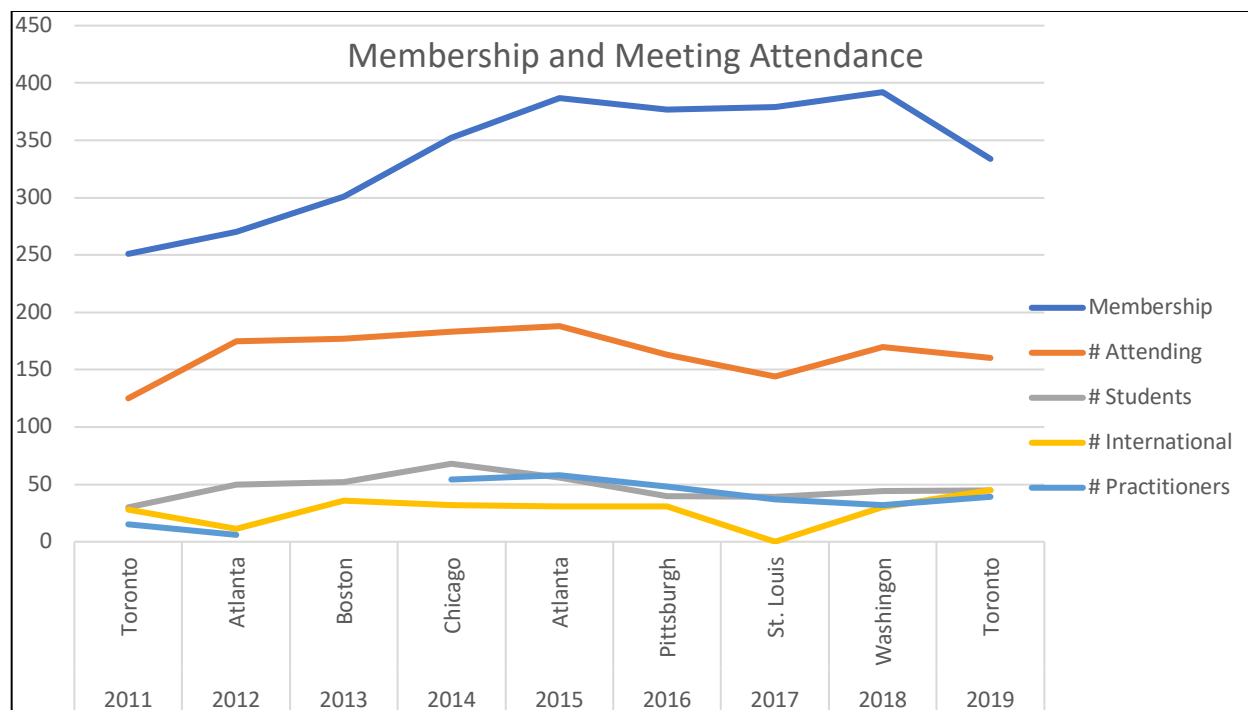
**I. Annual Meeting**

**2019 figures**

Attendance (10/26):	144
Breakout sessions:	24
Papers:	54
Presenters:	69
International	23
Students	23
Collaborations:	2
Posters:	2
Cancellations:	9 papers, 3 posters

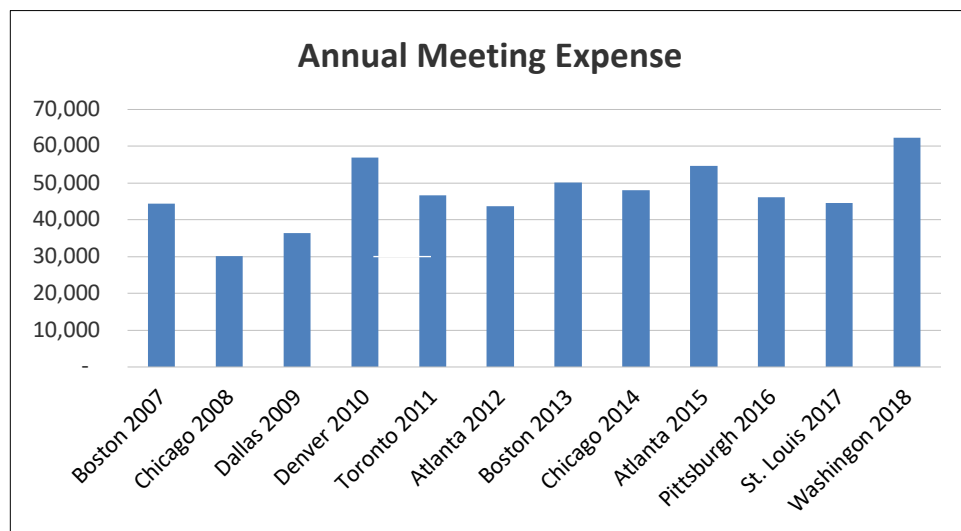
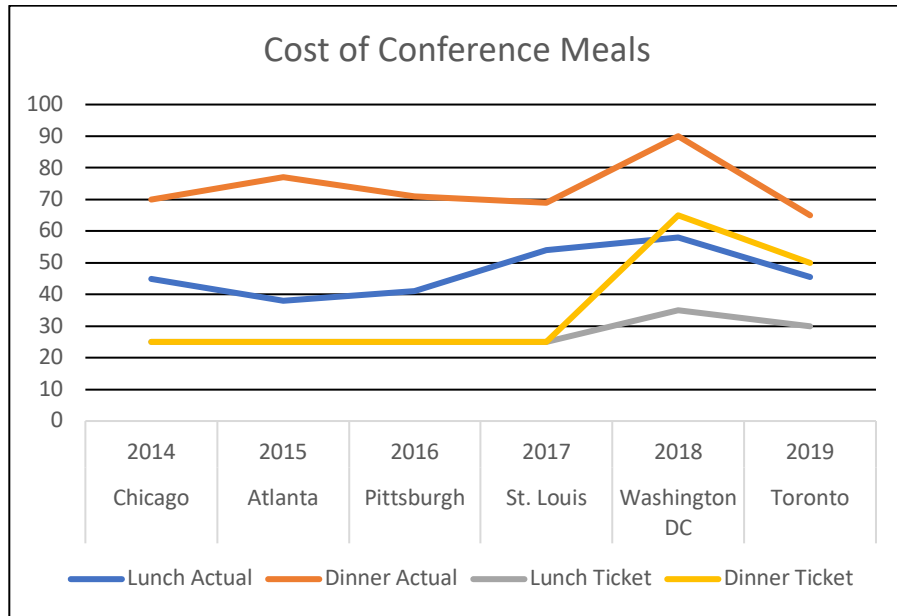
**2018 figures**

Attendance (10/26):	165
Breakout sessions:	26
Papers:	46
Presenters:	78
International	28
Students	25
Collaborations:	7
Posters:	5
Cancellations:	4 papers



**Meeting Arrangements**

Catering costs comprise between 60% and 70% of the cost of our annual meeting. Alternatives to catering are not an option since hotel contracts are based on a minimum food and beverage purchase amount, and they do not allow food to be brought in. The contract secures meeting space and reduced rates for rooms. Below is a history of the per person cost of our community lunches and annual banquets, including the amount of REA subsidy.



Hotel Selection Criteria: major international airport, low nightly price, easy and inexpensive transportation from airport, reasonable catering prices, numerous restaurant choices, hotel concessions (e.g., free meeting rooms and internet).

**2020 Meeting** – Due to our positive experience at the **St. Louis Union Station Hotel** in 2017, the hotel made an excellent proposal to host another REA meeting, so we arranged to return to the hotel for the 2020 meeting (\$155/night).

<http://www.stlouisunionstation.com/listings/union-station-hotel/>

**2021 Meeting** – Since it will be only eight months until the July 2022 meeting on the campus of St. Thomas University, a less ambitious REA program is planned alongside the AAR/SBL meeting in San Antonio, Texas, November 18-19, 2021.

**2022 Meeting** – Our first summer meeting will be held July 6-8 (Tuesday-Thursday) at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota. Rooms will be available in dorm suites, nearby hotels, and airbnbs. <https://www.stthomas.edu>

### **2019 Travel Awards**

There were 10 submissions, all U.S., out of 23 eligible student presenters. Members of the Steering Committee who assisted with the selection decided to award \$200 to each of the ten applicants.

1. Elizabeth Barsotti, Boston College, Advisor: Theresa O'Keefe	\$200
2. Renair Amin Covington, New York Theological Seminary, Advisor: Keith Russell	\$200
3. Scott Geminn, Fordham University, Advisor: Bud Horell	\$200
4. Julia Ji, Teachers College, Columbia University, Advisor: Victoria Marsick	\$200
5. Megan Krakowiak, Boston College, Advisor: Colleen Griffith	\$200
6. Jennifer Lewis, Boston University, Advisor: Courtney Goto	\$200
7. Paul Melley, Boston College, Advisor: Tom Groome	\$200
8. Huong Nguyen, Fordham University, Advisor: Bud Horell	\$200
9. Abe Rabinowich, Fordham University, Advisor: Bud Horell	\$200
10. Nathanael Thadikonda, Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, Virginia Union University, Advisor: Denise Janssen	<u>\$200</u>
Total	\$2000

## **II. Office Administration, Communication and Finances**

### **Membership Data**

We've seen a 15% drop in the past year from 388 to 329. This is our lowest membership level since August 2015. It is reasonable to think this drop is due to the mistakes made at the 2018 meeting that were addressed in the Board's February 2019 letter to members (<https://religiouseducation.net/blog/archives/5024>). Hopefully, addressing the issues of racism and injustice in our Association will mend its fabric and result in membership growth in numbers as well as wisdom. See the interactive chart of membership numbers and a variety of demographics here, using password "apprre": <https://www.religiouseducation.net/scripts/membership/overview.php>

### **Finances**

Financial statements and the 2020 Budget Proposal are included in the Treasurer's Report.

Our banking was moved from Key Bank in Connecticut to Chase Bank in California so that the Executive Secretary, who now resides in California, has more efficient access and better customer support. Multiple accounts for Harper, Wornom, and travel funds were consolidated into one checking account, but these accounts will retain independent records in REA books to provide accurate tracking, something that has been a problem in the past. We are also weighing the advantages of moving our investment account from Wells Fargo to JP Morgan Chase.

### **III. Board Participation and Support**

#### **Board meetings**

The Board of Directors meets twice annually, once in February or March (Thursday through Sunday) and again at the annual meeting (Thursday and Sunday). The Board has discussed the cost efficiency of the winter/spring meeting, but the consensus continues to be that meeting over the period of a few days allows important discussion of complex issues and long-term planning.

The Steering Committee and some other committees conduct Zoom web meetings several times during the year. The Steering Committee met ten times this way and keeps minutes of those meetings.

**2020 winter meeting** - Thursday dinner, February 13, through Sunday noon, February 16, Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio, TX.

#### **AAR**

REA continues its relation to AAR as a Related Scholarly Organization, which entitles us to one meeting at AAR each year for a reduced cost and listing in the program book.

REA at AAR 2018

## P18-403

### Religious Education Association

Theme: *Moving Pragmatically beyond White Normativity in Teaching and Learning*

Carmichael Crutchfield, Memphis Theological Seminary, Presiding

**Sunday - 6:30 PM-8:00 PM**

*Sheraton Downtown-Capitol (I.M. Pei Tower - Terrace Level - 1 level below Lobby)*

Recent events such as white supremacist rallies in the United States, or the push for a wall between Mexico and the United States, calls to close national borders to economic and political refugees, and the rise of nationalist candidates in European elections point to the intractable problems of white normativity, white privilege, and intolerance of “the other”.

This session intends to explore pedagogies that help us to move at least somewhat beyond that stance by creating brave spaces for learning and change. We will use an interactive fishbowl process to explore the syllabi of six educators from diverse parts of the religion academy. The second half of the session will engage session attendees through a structured form of interaction.

This session is an opportunity to connect with the Religious Education Association, a related scholarly organization of the AAR. We value interdisciplinary and intercultural research at the intersections of religion and education (see <https://religiouseducation.net>).

Panelists:

Eric D. Barreto, Princeton Theological Seminary

Mara Brecht, St. Norbert College, University of Toronto

Rachelle Green, Emory University

Jeremy Posadas, Austin College

Shively T.J. Smith, Boston University

Katherine Turpin, Iliff School of Theology

Carmichael Crutchfield, who served as moderator, reported that the 2018 session was full (approximately 30 people). The panelists were engaging, and people responded positively. Not including the panelists, only three attendees were current REA members, illustrating the potential of these sessions for creating interest in our organization. Afterwards a few nonmembers talked about coming to REA this year. Pedagogical interest was very high.

### REA at AAR 2019

Title: Scholar, Teacher, Administrator: The Case of the Religious Educator as Dean

Is administrative leadership in your future? We often do not have specialized preparation for such administrative duties, but we bring the excellence of our scholarly training and experience to bear on whatever tasks we undertake and decisions we make. What are the challenges of blending the identities of teacher, scholar, and dean? Four deans with advanced degrees in education as well as religion bring distinct and intriguing insights to a lively discussion probing leadership among colleagues and within institutions.

This session is an opportunity to connect with the Religious Education Association, a related scholarly organization of the AAR. We value interdisciplinary and intercultural research at the intersections of religion and education (see <https://religiouseducation.net>).

Presiding: Mary Hess, Luther Seminary

Panelists:

Faustino Cruz, Dean and Professor of Practical Theology, Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education, Fordham University

Leah Gunning Francis, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty, Associate Professor of Christian Education and Practical Theology, Christian Theological Seminary

Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty, Professor of Practical Theology and Religious Education, Claremont School of Theology

Javier Viera, Vice Provost and Dean, Professor of Pastoral Theology, Drew University Theological School

### **Changes in Board Structure**

The Board has worked to reconstruct carefully positions and responsibilities of Board and committee positions and established an Advisory Council, as our bylaws indicate. Putting this revision into place has involved informing members, responding to questions and suggestions, and proceeding with changes to the bylaws, where indicated.

The following five (5) main changes have been presented to the membership and are under discussion.

1. Move the Annual Meeting to Summer, meeting on campuses. We have discussed the idea of moving our Annual Meeting from November to the summer and meeting on university campuses.
  - a) This lowers the cost for members and for the Association by meeting on campuses rather than in costly hotels
  - b) Campuses are better equipped digitally to support breakout sessions and plenaries while keeping costs down in this area
  - c) More space would be available for the Annual Meeting, which means more breakout sessions are possible without having to put too many papers together in one session and having fewer sessions. This is in line with the suggestions from the Senior Working Group last November concerning too few breakout sessions with too many speakers in each one. It would also support the suggestion to have breakfast round table sessions because of the added space and the lower cost of the meeting.
  - d) Summer schedule may make it easier for members to attend with less competition for time such as meeting in November close to the meeting time for AAR.
  - e) Summer allows for possible collaboration with like-minded organizations such as ISREF
2. Separating the Program Chair position from the President's position. This means that the membership would not be voting for the Program Chair, Vice President-elect who then becomes the President after serving as Program Chair. In other words, the Program Chair is only elected for that position and the President is only elected for that position.

- a) This allows the membership to elect a Program Chair based on the proposed Annual Meeting theme
  - b) It allows for those with a skill set in administration to become President
  - c) Those with a skill set in conference planning and/or creativity to become Program Chair.
  - d) It allows the President to deliberately focus on that role and time to make a decided contribution to the Association.
3. Eliminating the position of Past President.
- a) The list of responsibilities for the Past President is very limited and unfocused.
  - b) Having a past president does add to the cost of the retreat
  - c) It has been felt that it is better to have a more trim and streamlined Board in which each person serves a targeted and clear purpose and function.
4. Create an Advisory Council
- a) It is healthier for the Association to have diverse voices contributing to its leadership
  - b) There is a great deal of work that could be accomplished. An advisory council would provide more opportunities for more work for the Association to be accomplished.
  - c) Creating an Advisory Council allows the Association to include more voices and people who could accomplish things for the Association without expanding the formal Board that increases the financial costs.
5. Creation of an Advancement Committee
- a) An Advancement Committee will allow the Association to focus on growth – financially and membership-wise
  - b) Currently there is no position or person on the Board responsible for looking at ways to increase membership and to increase the Association's financial resources. From time to time, individual Presidents or Board members may have tried to obtain grants, funding or consider membership drives. However, this is not effective. Most organizations have a focused role or committee that emphasizes this area.
6. Clarify and shorten Board term lengths.
- a) Currently the President serves 4 years: Vice President-elect, President-elect, President and Past President.
  - b) A President serves a 3 year term only. This also allows the President to see a change or idea through to its fruition by having a 3 year focused term as President.

### **Nomination Committee**

The slate of nominees will be voted on by the Board and membership at their November meetings. View the 2020 slate here: <https://religiouseducation.net/rea2018/news/>. Briefly, this is the slate that will be voted on:

Vice-President and Program Chair-Elect  
Chair, Publications Committee  
Chair, Committee on RE in Faith Communities  
Members, Committee on RE in Faith Communities

Members, Proposal Selection Committee

Member, Committee on RE in Academic Disciplines & Institutions  
Member, Harper/Wornom Committee

Patrick Reyes  
Almeda Wright  
Denise Janssen  
Eileen Daily  
Jennifer Haddad Mosher  
Monique van Dijk-Groeneboer  
Carl Procario-Foley  
Karen Marie Yust  
Anne Walker

Thank you for another year of meaningful work with good people!

Respectfully submitted,  
Lucinda Huffaker