

2023 Annual Report
AMS Committee on Meetings and Conferences (CoMC)

Executive Summary

The committee discussed the MathSafe program and the need to revise the Code of Conduct for AMS Meetings. It heard reports from three subcommittees: Broadening and Diversifying Meetings Portfolio, Holding Meetings in Localities with Discriminatory Practices or Laws (a joint subcommittee with CoProf), and The Future of AMS Meetings. It decided to review the AMS Short Course program in 2024.

Current policy states that conducting job interviews in hotel rooms violates the AMS Welcoming Environment Policy. The Committee believes there should be a firmer policy and asks Council to approve the following statement:

The AMS strongly encourages use of the Employment Center venues for all professional interviews of prospective employees at society meetings. The use of personal hotel rooms is not allowed. Interviews must be conducted in public meeting spaces.

Full Report

The Committee on Meetings and Conferences (CoMC) met on February 25, 2023, at the AMS headquarters in Providence, RI, and there was a videoconference option. The meeting was chaired by Gerard Venema of Calvin University (February 1, 2022 – January 31, 2024).

The Committee was asked to review the outcomes of MathSafe at the 2023 JMM and to determine how to proceed with a review of this program. It recommends that a subcommittee do a full review of the program in 2026 when more data is available. In connection with the discussion of MathSafe, the committee reviewed the policy regarding job interviews in hotel rooms at JMM. The current policy states that such interviews violate the AMS Welcoming Environment Policy. The Committee believes that there should be a firmer policy and asks Council to approve the following statement:

The AMS strongly encourages use of the Employment Center venues for all professional interviews of prospective employees at society meetings. The use of personal hotel rooms is not allowed. Interviews must be conducted in public meeting spaces.

The committee reviewed the Code of Conduct for AMS Meetings and decided that it should be updated to reflect best practices as described in Societies Consortium on Sexual Harassment in STEMM documents. A subcommittee was appointed to work on a revision of the code.

At its 2022 meeting the Committee decided that, due to competing priorities, it would not conduct an annual review in 2023. For 2024 the committee is reviewing the Short Course Program.

The Committee heard reports from the following subcommittees:

Broadening and Diversifying Meetings Portfolio and AMS Programming at Meetings.

Notes from the discussion.

- Continue to promote invited speakers from underrepresented groups.
- Have AMS sectional meeting at HBCUs and other minority serving institutions.
- There is still a need for in-person meetings, although virtual and hybrid meetings can help foster mathematical connections.
- Travel awards for more junior people.

Holding Meetings in Localities with Discriminatory Practices or Laws.

Notes from the discussion.

- International Meetings. While discriminatory practices and laws can be a cause for serious concern, the AMS does not have much control over those meetings.
- National Meetings. Seriously consider the possibility of defining specific criteria which, if not met, would render a locality inadequate for holding a national meeting.
- Sectional Meetings. The AMS should not rule out sections of the country for sectional meetings. Instead, the AMS should consider mitigating measures for conferences held in certain locations.
- Gender neutral bathrooms. Conference organizers should be advised to provide access to, and directions to, gender neutral bathrooms for participants.
- The subcommittee proposes to draft a list of recommendations that would be used by the AMS while vetting institutions hosting AMS conferences and meetings.

The Future of AMS Meetings. The work of this subcommittee resulted in a panel at the 2023 JMM. The panel was held on Saturday, January 9, 2023.

Notes from the discussion.

- Panelists and audience members appreciated that there's been significant movement towards inclusivity but that there was still substantial room to grow.
- Many, but not all, agreed that the benefits of in-person meetings exceed the benefits from on-line only meetings.
- Concerns were expressed at having in-person only meetings in locations where members would not feel safe.
- Many, but not all, expressed concern at having no on-line options for the JMM.
- Most were pleased that the AMS had a virtual sectional meeting.
- Many expressed concern that the AMS was not yet living up to the level of accessibility and inclusivity expressed on its website.
- Productive comments were offered on ways to make the in-person meetings more inclusive.

In other business, CoMC created two subcommittees: Review of the Short Course and Code of Conduct for Meetings and Conferences. It also made new assignments to the Subcommittee on Holding Meetings in Localities with Discriminatory Practices or Laws.

The committee decided to review the Short Course for its 2024 Annual Review. It decided not to sponsor a panel discussion at JMM 2024.

The committee did not have a mid-year meeting in 2023. The next annual CoMC meeting will be held on February 22-23, 2024, at the AMS headquarters in Providence, RI.

*Penny Pina, Director
Meetings and Conferences
Gerard Venema, Chair
Committee on Meetings and Conferences
November 2023*