

Meeting Minutes
Administrative Committee
Society for the Social Implication of Technology

Location: Columbia University, New York City, New York

Date: April, 1999

1. President Jerry Engel called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m., promising to be finished by lunch. He noted several candidates for [?], including [?], re-appointed for Division Six; Julian Reitman, for Division Five, and Brian Pfaffenberger, for Division Eight.

Attendance:	Clint Andrews	Society Treasurer	cjal@rci.rutgers.edu Jmbenjamin@aol.com
	Bob Dent	Div. VII Rep.	r.dent@ieee.org
	Jerry Engel	Society VP	g.engel@compmail.com
	Joe Herkert	Past Pres./Pub Chair	j.herkert@ieee.org
	Andy Meyer	Div. X Rep.	meyer@njit.edu (973) 996-3530
	Steve Unger	SSIT Ethics Comm. Chair	unger@cs.columbia.edu
	David Morton	SSIT Secretary	dmorton@rci.rutgers.edu
	Brian O'Connell		oconnellb@ccsu.edu
	Al Wald		aw7@columbia.edu

2. **Agenda** – The proposed agenda was adopted with the addition of Joseph Herkert's report on the Frontiers in Engineering conference.

3. **Minutes of the last meeting** – Approval of the minutes of the last meeting, December 1998, was approved.

4. President's Report

President Engel predicted hard times ahead for the Institute as it tries to streamline operations. He discussed several recent proposals for the IEEE, including "branding" issues, revisions to the financial model, and long-term investments. He mentioned the possibility of the creation of a special rate for non-SSIT members who simply want to subscribe to the magazine. Bob Dent reported the actions of the branding and financial committees of the IEEE. There is some support in the institute for changing the logo. The Institute's efforts to streamline include a proposal to redefine the roles of staff and volunteers. Clinton Andrews asked whether the SSIT should take a positive position on these issues. Jerry Engel suggested that it is probably too early to do so.

Engel reported that the SSIT is in fine shape financially due to conference and book broker income. Membership is still a concern, though the rate of decline is improving and fewer members are in arrears. Engel proposed a goal of 2500 SSIT members by the end of calendar year 1999. He wanted to do a better job of attracting new members at the upcoming ISTAS symposia. Joe Herkert suggested that people who apply for membership at the symposium be mailed copies of the special issue of Technology and Society magazine on gender and technology.

Engel proposed to provide up to \$500 to pay for SSIT publicity at the Sections Congress and PACE conference.

Engel then reported briefly on the IEEE membership retreat and mentioned that Technology and Society has won another award. He noted that last year's ISTAS Proceedings sold well, and that the Society is working with Joe Herkert on his new book project. The 1999 ISTAS conference is looking good, though

the 2000 meeting is more problematical. He noted that Simon Burne is working hard on getting this conference in shape.

President Engel's plans for the year include taking a close look at the bylaws. He also hopes to begin organizing ISTAS 2001 in Stamford, Connecticut. He wants to revitalize the awards and fellows programs to help draw attention to the Society.

5. Past President's Report

Jerry Engel read Ken Foster's report, which reiterated the need to redouble efforts on organizing the Rome ISTAS in 2000.

6. Publications Report

Joe Herkert mentioned that Terri Bookman, who was not in attendance, sent her regrets. Technology and Society magazine won a 1998 1st Place Award from the Society for Technical Communication's New York chapter. IN the national competition of the Society for Technical Communication, the magazine also won a Certificate of Merit. Herkert made a motion to issue a statement of appreciation for Terri and Bob Plonsey's activities related to Technology and Society.

Electronic Publishing and the Web: The contractor for the Technology and Society Web site has not performed as expected. Terri Bookman has taken responsibility for the site, but her work has been set back by a computer crash on the vendor's system. Some data was lost and Terri is just now catching up. A few minor problems remain.

Special Issues: Next year's special issues of Technology and Society include a special issue on ISTAS '99. A motion to have this issue be the first issue for 1999, and to have it edited by David Morton carried. Another special issue will be Bob Plonsey's project undertaken in conjunction with the Control Systems Society. This project has not been going well because of the low quality of submitted articles. Joe Herkert asked the group to help with ideas and suggestions for articles and nominations for a guest editor.

Steve Unger proposed a special issue on engineering careers to appeal to working engineers. Unger has ideas for authors on some topics. Herkert asked him to draft a formal proposal for this.

After some discussion of the possibility of increasing the current page count for S&T, it was decided to leave it the same.

Electronic publishing: Joe Herkert reported briefly on the outcomes of the Electronics Products Committee meeting in Savannah, Georgia. The IEEE will be expanding its activities in electronic publishing, emphasizing more electronic delivery of products and online peer reviewing. There are features of the business model for this activity that may impact the way prices for products are determined and revenues distributed. Some societies will benefit less than others. Herkert did not predict that pricing changes will negatively affect SSIT, but noted that the Institute is debating breaking up the ASPP to allow purchase of parts of it, a move that may have consequences for sales of T&S. Some in the IEEE want to make all publications available to all members at some reasonable price. This may affect the SSIT because the Society will eventually have to decide on a multitude of new price levels for its products.

The group discussed exploring ways to provide T&S to non-IEEE members at a price low enough to encourage the expansion of circulation but high enough to pay the costs of printing and mailing. One avenue that the Society will explore is reciprocal agreements with other professional societies for magazine subscriptions. Anyone with further suggestions for making T&S available to a wider (most likely non-IEEE) audience should contact Jerry Engel.

Herkert announced that he will attend the Press Board annual meeting, and that his book will appear this Fall from the IEEE Press.

7. Treasurer's Report

Clinton Andrews presented the current and projected SSIT budgets and highlighted the main changes. He mentioned that growth in income from T&S magazine sales is mainly due to the APSS, and that the Society now has some interest income.

Membership dues: Steve Unger proposed lowering the fees to \$19 as a way to attract more members. Herkert stated that he sympathized with Unger but opposed lowering the dues, because to do so might further the widespread perception within the Institute that the SSIT is subsidized. Bob Dent pointed out that SSIT dues are quite high compared to other IEEE Societies. Dent asked the Treasurer to determine the marginal cost of carrying a member. A motion to hold fees at \$22 for 2000 carried.

A proposal to leave the "General Interest" dues rate at \$24 carried. A motion to set the non-member list price for T&S magazine to \$175 carried.

President Engel returned to the idea of establishing cooperative arrangements with "sister" societies to promote the distribution of T&S and possibly to attract new members. A motion carried to authorize Engel to negotiate with potential sister societies to create a reciprocal agreement to provide subscriptions to T&S at or above the General Interest subscription rate. Morton agreed to contact the Society for the History of Technology as a test case.

8. Conference Report

Engel recommended a strong publicity campaign on behalf of ISTAS '99. In particular, he suggested that the symposium organizers should write to deans of engineering colleges, to solicit grants to the conference, possibly in return for exhibit space.

Engel reported slow progress on the Memorandum of Understanding for the Rome ISTAS 2000 meeting. He restated his confidence that it will be signed. Engel made a motion to have the Committee authorize him to take action on this matter. The motion carried. He also announced his intention to organize ISTAS 2001 in Stamford, Conn. on the theme of Social and Ethical Issues as Applied to [?]. He proposed a motion to write a proposal for this symposium. The motion carried.

Herkert proposed to conduct a tutorial session at the Frontiers in Engineering conference and circulated his proposal, which has not yet been accepted. He asked the Society to sponsor the workshop, paying up to 50% of his travel costs (in the range of \$900-1200). Jerry Engel's motion to support Herkert at that level carried.

9. Ethics/Social Issues Initiative

Brian O'Connell reported that he is anxious to work on the 2001 [ABET 2000?] conference.

10. Committee Reports:

Awards: No report

Technology and Public Policy: No report

Ethics

Unger reported that the Ethics Committee of the SSIT will organize a new ethics hotline independent of the IEEE. It will be co-sponsored by the National Institute of Engineering Ethics and will probably begin service in June. Engel reported the outcomes of a recent IEEE Ethics Committee meeting. This committee is revising its charter.

Membership

Engel made a motion for the Society to authorize him to spend up to \$500 each at the PACE and FIE conferences, for the purpose of gaining new members. The motion carried.

Nominations/Elections: : No report
Chapters: : No report
PACE: : No report
Other Society Liaison: : No report

11 Old Business

None

12. New Business

Joe Herkert congratulated Jerry Engel on an expeditious first meeting. Engel promised to change that. A motion to have Engel buy lunch for the group did not carry.

13. Next Meeting Date and Place

31 July, 1999 at the New Brunswick, N.J. Hyatt hotel, 1:00-5:00 p.m. to follow the 1999 ISTAS. The following meeting will take place 4 December 1999, but the location is not yet decided.

14. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

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