



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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A FLEXIBLE EDUCATION SYSTEM WHITE PAPER

Society members have recently received a most important document. It is, in effect, a preliminary report of the Future Education Methods Steering Committee; but its official title is "White Paper on a Flexible Education System for the Actuarial Profession".

In the October 1984 issue of this newsletter, Jim Murphy, then (and still) the Steering Committee Chairman, had this to say about the reasons for the formation of his Committee: "Currently, actuaries are educated through self-study. Mastery of the educational material is demonstrated by passing the Society's examinations. Both the world in which the actuary operates, and the material which the actuary must learn to operate in that world, have seen major changes. Technology has advanced dramatically, making possible some very innovative educational techniques. Traditional methods of education have been expanded both at university and professional levels. The objective of the FEM Committee is to review and recommend technological and/or traditional education methods for application to the actuary's education."

The White Paper, written by the FEM Committee, directs much of its attention to a related but not identical matter to which they have assigned the initials FES, standing for Flexible Education System. Those reading the White Paper a bit too quickly may find themselves confused. FES is a preliminary and independent step which is nonetheless necessary if FEM concepts are to follow. If this relationship between FES and FEM can be kept firmly in mind, the White Paper is much easier to follow. This article will attempt to keep its readers straight by discussing FES and FEM separately, and in that order.

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TWO MORE FELLOWS JOIN SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES STAFF

The main purpose of the Society of Actuaries, and one of its real strengths, has always been the education of the actuary. The Society's E & E structure over the years has developed into an extensive system supported by an incredible volunteer effort of over 400 SOA members. Last year the E & E Committee administered about 21,500 exams in over 200 locations internationally. This year that number will be even higher.

As the world has become more complex, so also has the Education and Examination System. To meet the challenges that a more complex world often brings, the system has been revised over the years and examinations have been periodically restructured. And now a new proposal called Flexible Education is currently being studied as yet another change to that system.

The Society has been fortunate through the years to have attracted a high calibre of volunteers to work in its E & E system. However, it has become increasingly more difficult for these volunteers to balance all the demands and complexities of the ever-growing E & E system with their individual careers. Therefore, to continue attracting the level of professionalism in our volunteers that we have in the past, and to lend additional support in the E & E area, two Fellows have been added to the SOA professional staff.

Albert E. Easton, FSA, has joined the staff as Director of Examinations, and Warren R. Luckner, FSA, has been named Director of Education. Warren will be on board in June. Both gentlemen bring considerable E & E experience to their new positions.

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A LOOK AT OUR MEETINGS

By John B. Yanko

You may have noticed the four yearly Society of Actuaries meetings have been changing. As Program Committee Chairman, I would like to explain these changes and assure you the meetings are for you — requiring your input and suggestions.

Until the spring of 1985, meetings followed a predictable format. Two Spring meetings were considered general topic with identical programs in two sites. This general topic format included five different meeting "tracks": Individual Insurance and Annuity; Financial; Group Insurance and Health; Pension and Social Insurance; and Professional and Miscellaneous. The third Spring meeting was a specialty meeting developed by the Continuing Education Committee. The Annual meeting followed the five-track format but was 2½ days rather than 1½ days as the three Spring meetings.

The Program Committee, with input from leaders in the profession and Sections, was responsible for each meeting's topic development and recruiting process. In 1984, it became apparent this structure required change to meet the various demands of our growing membership. Thus came the demise of the "twin" Spring meetings and the evolution of three Spring specialty meetings. The Annual meeting has remained a general topic meeting.

The table on page 3 illustrates the change between the old format for spring meetings in 1984 and the new format used in 1985 and repeated in 1986.

Not only did attendance increase almost 18% but also it was more evenly distributed among all three locations.

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Look at Our Meetings

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*ATTENDANCE	YEAR/CITY	TOPIC
1984		
549	Atlanta	General topic format
513	Salt Lake	General topic format
1,147	New York	Investment Strategy (Special Topic)
2,209		
1985		
1,126	San Francisco	Health and Product Development (Special Topic)
614	St. Louis	Financial Reporting (Special Topic)
857	Quebec City	General format with international emphasis; jointly sponsored with the Canadian Institute of Actuaries
2,597		
1986		
	San Diego	Employee Benefits (Special Topic)
	Boston	Current Issues for Life and Annuity Actuaries (Special Topic)
	Kansas City	Regulation for Life and Health Insurers (Special Topic)

Includes nonmembers

Although attendance at the three 1986 meetings is not final, we anticipate the trend will continue.

For the 1987 spring meetings, a call for topics has been sent to the section chairpersons and to the leaders of other actuarial organizations. Once these ideas have been "digested," we hope to have three special topic meetings for 1987.

The topic and recruitment process for all four meetings has begun to rely more on the efforts of Sections and the membership itself. You may have been one of a select group of 100 to receive a questionnaire asking for topic and speaker requests for either the 1985 Annual meeting or the 1986 Spring meetings. The Sections have approached the meetings from a "grass-roots" standpoint including the formation of their own program committees. They solicit topic and speaker input from the Section membership to incorporate in the meeting programs. Some sections have separate program committees and all have liaison representatives on the Society's Program Committee. We hope this approach has made the meeting sessions more topical

and responsive to the membership needs.

At the 1986 Annual meeting, yet another educational facet will be added to the meetings — technical exhibits. We anticipate 40 exhibitors who will display computer software and reinsurance and consulting services. This will expose the membership to the latest innovations in this market and provide an educational atmosphere to observe and compare products. You will receive more information with the meeting registration materials to be mailed in July.

I hope we can appreciate the amount of volunteer effort that goes into a successful meeting. The networking and discussion among peers is truly a feature of our meetings. This approach to our meetings requires a commitment to adequately plan and prepare for these sessions. It also requires current and new members alike not be afraid to address their peers.

As the Task Force to Study the Role of Meetings prepares policy and implementation recommendations for the Board of Governors' approval, we hope to further improve the meetings. □

SOA Staff Additions

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Al has been active in the Society's E & E structure for many years, where he served as the Chairperson of Part 7 for one year and the Chairperson for Part 5 for two years. Before that, he was a multiple-item writer for Part 5 and also wrote a study note which was used on the Part 5 syllabus before it was revised.

Al comes to the Society from Berkshire Life Insurance Company in Pittsfield, Mass., where he was Vice-President and Actuary for several years. He began his actuarial career at the Equitable. He became a Fellow in 1966 and holds a B.A. degree in mathematics from Brown University. He is also a CLU, FLMI, EA and MAAA. He is the past Secretary of the Actuaries Club of Hartford and in 1983 was President of the Adirondack Actuaries Club.

Warren comes to the Society from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he is Assistant Professor and Director of the Actuarial Science Program. He began his actuarial career at the Aid Association for Lutherans in Appleton, Wisc. Warren is also the current President of the Nebraska Actuaries Club.

He holds a B.A. degree in mathematics from Luther College, an M.A. in mathematics from the University of Maryland, and an M.A. in elementary education from the University of Kentucky. He became a Fellow in 1976 and is also a member of the American Academy of Actuaries.

Warren, like Al, has spent several years in the Society's E & E structure. He has been a member of the Part 9 Committee and was the Education Coordinator for the current Part 9 syllabus. He also served a one-year term as a General Officer.

Warren has published a paper and two discussions in the *Transactions*, co-authored a paper which appeared in the *CAPP Proceedings*, and has had papers published in *ARCH*. He has also been a speaker at several SOA and local Actuarial Club meetings and currently serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the Futurism Section.

The addition of Al Easton and Warren Luckner to the SOA staff, joining Linden Cole, now brings three FSA's on board to lend professional support to the Society's Education and Examination structure. □