

International Affairs Committee-US National Committee  
Annual Report  
September 2006

Part 1 — Charter Updates

Below are the responsibilities of the International Affairs Committee-US National Committee as defined in the approved charter. Please provide updates on activities since the last annual meeting in green.

***Advise***

- Advise the Council of the Society for Neuroscience, the President of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), and the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO) Governing Council on international matters that are relevant to neuroscience.
  - The committee continues to advise the Council of the Society for Neuroscience, the President of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), the Canadian Association for Neuroscience (CAN) and Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction (INMHA), and the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO) Governing Council on international matters that are relevant to neuroscience.

***Represent***

- Serve as the US National Committee to IBRO and as the United States and Canadian Regional Committee of IBRO. The joint committee will participate in the activities and governance of IBRO on behalf of the National Academy of Sciences and the Society for Neuroscience.
  - The committee continues to serve as the US National Committee to IBRO and as the United States and Canadian Regional Committee of IBRO. Please see the descriptions of activities below for further information.
- The chair also serves as a member of the Executive Committee of the Governing Council of IBRO.
  - The chair continues to serve as a member of the Executive Committee of the Governing Council of IBRO. The chair or his representative attended various meetings of the governing council of IBRO throughout the year and had a number of conference calls with Dr Albert Aguayo, the President of IBRO.

***Manage Activities***

- Promote basic and clinical neuroscience research worldwide by hosting or participating in one or more international neuroscience activities per year.
  - The IAC-USNC sponsored a course in Cape Town, South Africa, from July 1-July 9, 2006. The course was titled “Neural Systems: From Channels to Circuits” and was modeled after the Neural Systems and Behavior summer course at the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. The organizers and faculty of the MBL’s “Neural Systems:

From Channels to Circuits” brought decades of experience teaching at MBL and a desire to provide similar training to African neuroscientists. The school included lectures, lab exercises and workshops. Financial support for the course was provided by the African Regional Committee of IBRO, the IAC-USNC via funds from NIH, The Grass Foundation, Corte Instruments, Carl Zeiss, Inc., and John H. Haines, M.D. A full report on this activity is included in the informational items.

- The IAC-USNC is working with the Asia-Pacific Regional Committee to organize a course on neurodegeneration in Melbourne, Australia, in conjunction with the 2007 IBRO Congress. Asian-Pacific neuroscientists from developing countries are the target audience for this course, which aims to build upon the Neurobiology of Disease (NDW) workshop titled “Protein Misfolding as a Common Pathway in the Dementias and Other Neurodegenerative Diseases.” Further information on plans for the course are included in the informational items.
- The IAC also submitted a proposal for Council’s consideration on partial sponsorship of an event hosted by the Croatian Neuroscience Society.
- Encourage the professional development of promising young neuroscientists with an emphasis on the developing world both in their own regions and in established courses and programs in developed countries by offering travel awards to the SfN annual meeting and financial assistance to committee-approved Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) and Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory (CSHL) and other approved neuroscience courses.
  - The committee worked with IBRO’s Board of Schools and Marine Biological Laboratory and Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory course instructors to identify and encourage highly qualified and motivated research trainees from developing countries to apply for admission to summer neuroscience courses at the MBL and CSHL. In 2006, a total of four MBL fellowships and one CSHL fellowship were awarded.
  - In addition to funding their participation in the MBL and CSHL courses, the IBRO fellows who submit an abstract will receive a travel stipend of \$1,500 to the SfN Annual Meeting, plus one complimentary workshop registration for a course during the week of the SfN Annual Meeting. Nine past fellows from 2004-2005 will be attending Neuroscience 2006.
- Offer the very best of the young developing scientists around the world who complete these international training courses a subsequent opportunity to have a two- to three-month lab experience in an excellent laboratory with a stipend to cover approved travel and living costs.
  - The committee decided to delay the beginning of this activity in order to further examine the implications and hosting requirements at the fall committee meeting.
- Identify specific training and development needs and opportunities of neuroscientists around the world, through a needs assessment.
  - An analysis of needs assessments already conducted in neuroscience by other organizations will be presented at the fall meeting. The committee will then use this as a basis for determining their future actions.

- SfN's Member Enhancement Plan and related survey will look at the professional development and training needs of members and potential members, including those located internationally. The results of this plan will be used by the committee to help determine international training needs.
- Investigate third party funding options for providing more intensive training courses outside the United States.
  - One committee member will be presenting a report at the fall committee meeting on his suggestions for third-party funding. The committee will use this report to discuss the topic further and explore possibilities.
- Maintain a Web site that offers information and resources for neuroscientists in all countries.
  - The committee has continued to work on a seminar and neuroscience methods series to bring up-to-date neuroscience information to researchers in developing countries via the Internet ([www.iac-usnc.org](http://www.iac-usnc.org)). Web-based neuroscience lectures are accessible by scientists worldwide and feature narrated data slides by prominent neuroscientists from the NAS and the SfN. Our newest feature on the site is the Neurobiology of Disease Workshop, "Protein Misfolding as a Common Pathway in the Dementias and Other Neurodegenerative Diseases," which was featured at the 2004 SfN Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA. From the 2005 SfN meeting, the IAC-USNC is working on posting one short course and the Neurobiology of Disease Workshop on autism spectrum disorders.

***Coordinate and Communicate***

- Coordinate activities with the other committees in the Member Development and Benefits Cluster of the Society for Neuroscience, which also includes the Membership and Chapters committee, and the Professional Development, Mentoring, and Diversity Cluster, which includes the Committee on Women in Neuroscience and the Committee on Diversity in Neuroscience. The chair will serve as the committee's representative on the cluster steering committees.
  - A representative of the committee will be attending the first cluster meetings of both clusters.
  - IAC is considering a proposal submitted to Council by the Membership and Chapters committee regarding international travel awards. The proposal is included in the action items.
- Liaise with the Canadian Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction and other Canadian neuroscience organizations as appropriate.
  - The committee applied to IBRO for funding for an IBRO Neuroscience School in Canada. The May 2007 school, organized as a pilot project, will be held in conjunction with the Canadian Association for Neuroscience (CAN) Meeting. The school will focus on epilepsy and serve 10-15 students, with priority given to previous participants in Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction (INMHA) supported schools in Africa and Latin America. The committee is waiting for a response from IBRO on whether the requested funds will be provided.

Part 2 — Other Updates

Please provide updates on any other activities of the committee that are not already covered in the charter.

At the spring 2006 IAC meeting the committee conducted a strategic planning session with an outside consultant, David Heil. The final report has been prepared. The session included a SWOT analysis and strategic initiatives for the future. The committee decided to continue with its past programs. New initiatives that the committee is pursuing as a result of the session are already outlined in this report.

Part 3 — Questions for Cluster Steering Committee / Council

Use the space below propose questions for discussion by the Cluster Steering Committee (if appropriate) and/or Council.

The committee needs to work on updating its charter to take into account its responsibilities to US and Canadian entities other than SFN, and to IBRO as a regional committee.

Part 4 — Other Comments

Use the space below for any other comments.

There are no additional comments.