General Report

The Council of Soil Science Examiners (CSSE) meets two times per year as a full committee: at the Annual Meetings for their annual business meeting and during the summer to write exam questions. At other times the Procedures Committee conducts business on behalf of the CSSE, which includes finalizing and approving new questions after the summer meeting, updating the exams with new questions for upcoming year, reviewing exam scores to ensure that questions were fair, setting cut scores for the each exam, and any other business that presents itself during the year. In addition there are several committees that have ongoing work:

The Performance Objective (PO) Committee is responsible for ensuring that the POs are kept current by updating the POs every two years. In addition this committee sends the performance objectives out to the profession every 6 to 8 years in survey form to determine appropriateness of the POs and the “weight” that each of the six areas of soil science competency should be given on the exams. This survey was completed during 2003, and an updated version of the POs will be available in 2004.

The Outreach Committee responsibilities include design, edit, updating of the CSSE webpage, which includes interfacing with ASA Headquarters to complete this task. In addition, the committee takes special projects as directed by the CSSE such as using the Fundamentals Exam as an outcomes assessment tool in universities.

The Exam Review Committee responsibilities include selecting questions for insertion into the Fundamental and Professional Practice exams. Twenty percent of the exam is changed each year (therefore 100 percent over a five year period).

Fall meeting 2002

November 2002, Indianapolis, IN
CSSE Meeting

The committee met in Indianapolis for its annual business meeting. At that time the following items were discussed with the full CSSE:

- Committee reports
- Summer meeting dates
- New committee appointment suggestions
- Thank you to departing members
- Exam anchoring
The Procedures Committee met after the full CSSE to discuss items that needed to be voted on. These items included:

- Exam costs (voted to stay the same)
- Fees for exam upkeep (voted to charge licensing boards and ARCPACS an annual dues of $2,000)
- Discussed temporary waivers for states that, due to their finances or small number of licensees, cannot afford the annual dues of $2,000
- Discussed issues with headquarters and the need for a better working relationship as well as a specified delegate from headquarters to finally replace Annie (who left in 2001).
- Discussed the budget

**Summer meeting 2003**

July 2003, Minneapolis, MN
CSSE Meeting

The committee spent the majority of its time writing scenarios and questions for the Professional Practice Exam. As a guest speaker at lunch on Friday, the Executive Director of the Minnesota Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture, Geoscience, and Interior Design provided comments on licensing in general as well as issues with exam security, training proctors, and contracts with licensing boards for giving exams. Additional items covered during the meeting are as follows:

- The exam dates for 2004 were set and moved to Fridays. They are March 26 and October 4, 2004.
- Performance Objective review by peers were sent out in early August and the results will be available to the committee for the Denver meetings.
- The CSSE meeting at the annual meeting in Denver will be changed to November 1, 3:00 to 7:00 PM.
- An Engineering Promotion kit was reviewed. Sam Feagley offered to seek out grant money and it was decided to review the same video at the ASA annual meetings with the SSSA Executive Committee. The SSSA Executive Committee will join CSSE on Saturday, Nov. 1 at 5:00 PM to review/discuss the video and how something similar could be done for soil science professionals.
- The CSSE committee structure was reviewed. The committee will be smaller and the structure rewritten. There will be a maximum of 18 members, 3 from each section. This will be achieved through attrition over the next few years. A term of 3 years with the ability to serve no more than 2 consecutive 3-year terms will apply.
- The committee also felt that there should be a "2 misses and off the committee" rule added to the committee description. It is very important that all members take their position very seriously and that CSSE is a working committee. After a member misses to consecutive meetings they will be asked to resign.
- The procedures committee was replaced with an executive committee made up of a chair, vice-chair and past-chair. Each will serve a 2-year term in each position. The committee will
elect a vice-chair every other year. It was recommended that Dawn Tracy remain as Chair and Mike Mullen be elected to vice-chair. There will not be a past-chair at this time. 

**Motion:** Sam/Ivan, To accept the new committee structure including Dawn as the chair. **All in favor.**  
**Motion:** Sam/Ivan, To accept the recommendation that Mike Mullen become the vice-chair. **All in favor.**

- The committee description will be re-written at ASA, reviewed by the CSSE Executive Committee, and sent to the Executive Committee for review before finalized.

- The budget was reviewed and some minor edits made. CSSE should be in a positive balance within two years. The committee structure was changed as described with a smaller committee reducing expenses. The exam fees were increased to $125 each and the study guide price was increased to $40 each. **Motion:** Mike M./Sam, To accept the budget as edited with the exception to check exam fee ceilings for states with licensing. **All in favor.**

- There was lengthy discussion regarding the next summer meeting. It was decided to hold an optional educational tour/CE session prior to the CSSE workshop. We will explore doing this in conjunction with SSSA and the state soils science association. The tentative dates are July 14-17, 2004 in Lexington, KY. The 14th would be the optional day with the CSSE starting at 1:00 PM on the 15th and completing by noon on the 17th. Members were asked to hold the dates with more details to follow.

**Other Business**

There were several other items of business that have been discussed over the past year, which are listed below.

- **Question Database** – need to establish a question database that can be queried by exam date, PO, discipline, etc. for ease of constructing exams and keeping track of when questions have been used. The CSSE is currently working on this through volunteers.

- **Outcome assessments** – the CSSE has been working on this for the past few years. It appears as if we now have several universities interested in using the Fundamentals Exam for this purpose in 2004. We are hopeful that the list will grow.

- **Business Plan** – the Chair of the CSSE provided a Business Plan to ASA Headquarters and the Executive Committee in June 2003 to outline the committee, its purpose, its goals and a plan for getting the CSSE operating in the black.

- **Participation in round table in Denver** – the Chair of the CSSE will participate in this event

- **Poster by the Procedures Committee at annual meeting** – a poster entitled “Licensure and Certification of Soil Science Professionals: Promoting the Profession” will be presented in Denver.

**Unfinished Business**

The CSSE, by its very nature, always has unfinished business as the committee is constantly striving to provide exam questions for both the Fundamentals of Soil Science and the Professional Practice exams. In addition, the Performance Objectives are constantly being updated.
As discussed above, the POs were recently sent out in the form of a survey for the profession. CSSE will be looking at the results and providing updated POs in 2004.

The CSSE has decided to evaluate the currently available study guides for the exams for consistency with the exams that the committee creates. There have been suggestions that the study guides may not reflect the layout of the exams adequately.

Suggestions

1. The CSSE recommends the discontinuance of S582.1 (the Procedures Committee) in favor of restructuring the CSSE to have an executive committee consisting of chair, vice-chair, and past chair positions with terms of 2 years each. As stated above, the committee description will be re-written at ASA, reviewed by the CSSE Executive Committee and sent to the Executive Committee for review before finalized.

2. The CSSE recommends a change in the number of committee members from 24 to 18 for budgetary purposes.

Recommendations

The CSSE has no proposed recommendations for the Board to vote on at this time.

Remarks:

The CSSE would like to extend its thanks for the appointment of Luther Smith from Headquarters to the CSSE.

Committee Member Replacements

Due to budget constraints and a restructuring of the CSSE no new committee member appointments are being brought forward for terms starting in 2004. It should be noted that members that are appointed by the individual state licensing boards and the ARCPACS board serve at the pleasure of their respective boards.

Members of the Society Activity

The following list shows the current committee with notes after their names for their membership status for 2004 at the conclusion of the annual meetings. Dates shown reflect the committee member’s final year of appointment. For example, 2004 would indicate that the person would either be retired or need to be re-appointed after the Annual meeting in 2004.

Membership on the committee for 2003 was 25, for 2004 membership on the committee will be 20.

Executive Committee
Dawn Tracy, Chair (2004 - 2006)
Mike Mullen, Vice-Chair (2004 – 2006)
The Past Chair position will be vacant until 2006 appointments when Dawn Tracy will move to that position.
Full CSSE (by discipline)

Soil Chemistry
- Ivan Fernandez (ME Board rep - no end date)
- Jeff Hattey (2005)
- Warren Brady (2004 - will be retired early (this year) due to lack of attendance)

Soil Fertility
- John Grove (2005)
- Tracy Benzel (WI Board rep - no end date)
- Sam Feagley (2005)

Soil Physics
- Bob Luxmoore (2005)
- Sabrina Cook (2004)
- Lisa Palazzi (2003 - will be retired due to committee restructuring)
- Dawn Tracy (MN Board rep/Chair)

Genesis/Morph/Class
- Mike Konen (2004)
- Mark McClain (2003 - will be retired due to committee restructuring)
- Joe Kleiss (NC Board rep - no end date)
- Murray Milford (TX Board rep - end date of 2007)

Soil Biology
- Mark Radosavech (2005)
- Terry Rahe (2003 - will be retired due to committee restructuring)
- Mike Mullen (Vice Chair)

Land Use
- Kathy Newkirk (2005)
- Melissa Trenchick (2003 - will be retired due to committee restructuring)
- Tom Deluca (2004)
- Ken Potrykus (2004)

In addition, we have a new ARCPACS rep that has been assigned. It will take us another year to reduce the committee to the desired number of members.

Signature and Typewritten Name of Person Preparing the Report:

Dawn R. Tracy, Ph.D., PSS
Chair, Council of Soil Science Examiners