

ASAIL Review for MLA (Draft submitted in on-line form, on July 18, 2023)

Statement of Purpose:

The Association for the Study of American Indian Literature (ASAIL) is a professional academic organization created to promote study, criticism, and research on the oral traditions and written literatures of Native Americans; to promote the teaching of such traditions and literatures; and to support and encourage contemporary Native American writers and the continuity of Native narrative traditions.

ASAIL's mandate broadly includes the following activities : (a) promoting the rigorous and respectful study, criticism, and research in the oral traditions and literatures of Indigenous peoples throughout North America; (b) encouraging scholarship that attends to the sociopolitical priorities of Indigenous peoples and nationhood; (c) providing strong mentorship and professionalization opportunities for graduate students and junior scholars in the field; (d) expanding access to relevant pedagogical resources through conferences and the ASAIL listserv; and (e) drawing on the work of established literary voices, senior scholars, and elders, while also expanding the range of texts, critical and creative perspectives, and analytical considerations in new and exciting directions.

Brief history of the organization since last reviewed:

ASAIL's last review was in 2013. ASAIL was due for a review in 2020, but because of the pandemic and Molly McGlennen's role as newly appointed president, we asked for an extension. Since our last review in 2013, a number of unfortunate events have taken place. First, our president elected in 2017, Carol Edelman Warrior, passed away unexpectedly, leaving a vacancy which the previous president, Becca Gercken, then filled. As VP, [Molly McGlennen](#) rotated into her role as president in 2020 after which ASAIL held a successful election for VP, electing Laura Furlan. Secondly, due to Covid, the Native American Literature Symposium (our affiliated conference that is not organized by ASAIL) has been on hiatus, thus leaving ASAIL without an annual conference for its members in 2020 and 2021. Because of this, this year and last (2022 and 2023) ASAIL has organized and held a Virtual Conference each year in April, sponsored through the president's institution. Because of the Virtual Conference's continued success, the board has decided to continue with this conference each year, sponsored by the president's institution, until or unless NALS returns. In addition, ASAIL has maintained a consistent and engaged presence at the MLA annual convention, with two ASAIL-sponsored panels earning the President's theme distinction in 2022 and 2023. Finally, ASAIL has revived its affiliation with ALA (American Literature Association), which had waned since Covid, and has created an official affiliation with WLA (Western Literature Association).

How much has the organization grown since last reviewed, if at all?

Individual memberships in our association have doubled since Covid/2020 where numbers had reached a low for obvious reasons. We are happy to report that membership, presently at 128, has bounced back to pre-covid numbers. Our listserv, which is comprised of past and current members, has 280 subscribers, and continues to be a virtual, active forum for conversations around Native literatures and pedagogy.

We have also revamped our website (www.asail.org), making it easier to navigate and include and update important news, membership information, and related opportunities. One of the most exciting updates concerning our website is the introduction of the *SAIL Review*, which in coordination with University of Nebraska Press, has become the online companion source for our journal, *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, book reviews.

We continue to seek nominations and grant our three annual awards (Beatrice Medicine Awards for Scholarship in American Indian Studies—for Outstanding Essay and Monograph, and the Electa Quinney Award for Published Stories). Excitingly, last year (2022) we created a new award, named after Carter Revard (Osage)—revered elder scholar of Native American Literature and poet—for the Best Collected Work.

ASAIL proudly awarded unprecedented numbers of graduate student memberships, giving 7 in 2023, and we continued to donate registrations and conference support for the Virtual Conference and the MLA conference for graduate students and early career and contingent faculty. As one of our working goals, we have renewed our attention to supporting graduate students and early career faculty and have a newly elected graduate representative now serving on our board.

A list of ongoing and past activities since the last review (Do not list your convention sessions):

- Virtual ASAIL Conference, April 2022, hosted by Vassar College
- Virtual ASAIL Conference, April 2023, hosted by Vassar College
- Online SAIL Review, initiated 2021 (<https://www.asail.org/sail-review/>)
- Updated Website, initiated 2020
- Held board elections, 2021 and 2023. Beginning July 2023, ASAIL has a newly elected board, which includes the return of some established scholars in the field to the board giving it expertise. And organizational and institutional knowledge.
- As of July 1, 2023, the board is as follows:
 - President, Laura Furlan (UMass Amherst)
 - Vice President, [Lisa Tatonetti](#) (Kansas State University)
 - Secretary, Susan Bernardin (Oregon State University)
 - Treasurer, [Jeff Berglund](#) (Northern Arizona University)
 - Graduate Representative, Madison Fowler-Niblock (PhD Student, University of Oregon)
 - Pedagogy Committee Chair, Brian Twenter (University of Central Oklahoma)
 - Professional Development Chair, Becca Gercken (University of Minnesota-Morris)
 - Website Editor, Jeremy M. Carnes (University of Central Florida)
 - Historian, Robert Nelson (University of Richmond)

Publications produced by the organization:

Studies in American Indian Literatures is the only scholarly journal in the United States and Canada that focuses exclusively on American Indian literatures (Series 1: 1977-1987; Series 2, 1989-present). Since 2004, the journal has been published by the University of Nebraska Press which has given *SAIL* more scholarly visibility and continues to be the flagship publication for Native American Literatures. The ASAIL board continues to have discussions around the possibility of online subscriptions (web-only access) being tied to the organization's memberships. For now, ASAIL members continue to receive the journal in print form. As we have already described, the *SAIL Review* is another publication produced by the organization, the goal of which is to publish book reviews much more quickly than its counterpart.

- **A copy of the organization's constitution and/or bylaws, with the date of adoption;**

By-Laws

Current By-Laws

Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures | Organization By-Laws
January 4, 1991, amended 2002, amended 2004, amended 2009.

I. Name of the organization.

The name of the organization shall be The Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures.

II. Purpose.

{Amended 2009}

The purpose of the organization shall be to promote study, criticism, and research on the oral traditions and written literatures of Native Americans; to promote the teaching of such traditions and literatures; and to support and encourage contemporary Native American writers and the continuity of Native oral traditions. The organization shall operate exclusively for these educational purposes in accordance with section 503(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

III. Membership.

There shall be three categories of membership. The dues within each category shall be established by the Executive Committee following consultation with association members at a business meeting.

1. Regular membership: Educators professionally interested in the above-stated purpose of the organization or persons otherwise active in furthering such goals may become regular members of the association.
2. Limited income membership: Persons retired from professions relevant to the above-stated purpose and Native American writers may apply for membership in this category. Also, graduate students engaged in courses of study in Native American oral traditions or writing may for a maximum of four years become members at this level, provided they do not hold full-time teaching positions.

3. Patron Persons who contribute at higher financial levels than required for regular membership may join the association at this level.
4. Honorary membership Honorary membership may be granted to distinguished persons of letters and scholars of any nationality upon nomination by the Executive Committee and election by the membership at an association business meeting.

Only members in good standing may hold office in the association and vote in association elections and meetings.

IV. Officers & Responsibilities

- The officers of the association shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary and a treasurer.
- With the advice of the Executive Committee, the president shall administer the affairs of the association. The president shall preside at meetings of the Executive Committee and at associate business meetings. Also, the president shall communicate regularly with members through the association journal concerning association business.
- The vice-president shall preside at all Executive Committee meetings and business meetings from which the president must be absent. In addition, the vice-president shall assume presidential administrative duties when so requested by the president and the Executive Committee and shall serve as liaison with other organizations whose professional purposes correspond to ASAIL's.
- The secretary shall record the minutes of Executive Committee meetings and of membership business meetings. A summary of business meeting minutes shall be published in the association journal as soon as feasible following each meeting. The secretary shall also preserve minutes of all meetings for five years and shall pass these on to the succeeding secretary.
- The treasurer shall collect and manage association funds (including keeping accurate and current records of association income, assets, and expenses) so as to further association goals. As major instruments for achieving these goals, the association journal and newsletter shall receive priority in the expenditure of association funds. In addition, the treasurer shall maintain accurate and current membership lists and shall answer all queries regarding membership. The treasurer shall also make financial reports at Executive Committee meetings and at association business meetings. The association financial records shall be available to the Executive Committee upon request.

V. Officers — Election

- Officers shall be elected from among current membership.
- {Amended 2002} The slate of nominees for election shall be prepared by the Election Committee prior to the association's annual business meeting at the Native American Literature Symposium.
- {Amended 2002} Election of officers shall be by secret ballot at the annual business meeting during the Native American Literature Symposium. However, in unusual and compelling circumstances, the Executive Committee may, with the approval of the members present at this meeting, choose to conduct the election by mail ballot.

- Terms and Sequence of Elections

- The initial election officers shall be conducted as follows: In December, 1991, the president and the treasurer shall be elected to two year terms; the vice-president and the secretary shall be elected to one year terms.
- Beginning with the elections of officers in December, 1992, the election sequence shall be as follows: The president and the treasurer shall be elected to two year terms in odd-numbered years; the vice-president and the secretary shall be elected to two year terms in even-numbered years.
- {Amended 2002} Beginning with the elections of officers in March, 2004, the election sequence shall be as follows: the secretary and the treasurer shall be elected to two year terms in each odd-numbered year; the president shall automatically be succeeded by the vice-president, and a new vice-president elected, in each even-numbered year.

- Neither the president nor the vice-president may be elected to consecutive terms.

VI. Executive Committee

- The Executive Committee shall meet as often as feasible to conduct association business. In any event, the Committee shall meet at least once a year at the Modern Language Association convention and once prior to the business meeting at the association's own convention, if any.
- {Amended 2004} The membership of the Executive Committee shall include the president, the vice-president, the secretary, the treasurer, the editor of the association journal, and the association historian.
- The responsibilities of the Committee shall be:
 - to further the goals of the organization;
 - to initiate and supervise the services of the association;
 - to approve the budget of the association and to supervise its expenditure and to act on proposals regarding dues structure and subscription rates for publications;
 - to make recommendations to the membership, to act on recommendations by members, and to inform members of actions taken;
 - to establish and discharge committees, either on recommendation of the membership or on its own initiative, and to designate their chairs;
 - {Amended 2004} to oversee publications, media, and archives of the association, including appointing, assisting, and advising the editor of the association journal and the association historian;
 - to plan conventions and other meetings of the association.

VII. Association Meetings

- {Amended 2002} The association shall hold business meetings during either the Native American Literature Symposium or its own convention, if any, and during the annual Modern Language Association convention.
- The association shall hold conventions at times and places determined by the Executive Committee. In an emergency, the Executive Committee shall have the power to cancel a convention.
- Conventions shall be planned by the Executive Committee with the advice of a program committee appointed by the Executive Committee.

- Association sessions at the annual Modern Language Association convention shall be planned by session chairs appointed by the Executive Committee.

VIII. Amendments

- Proposals for amendments to these by-laws may be initiated by the Executive Committee or by any association member.
- {Amended 2002} All amendments to be brought before the membership shall be published at least ninety days before the business meeting at which they are to be voted on or mailed to members at least thirty days before the business meeting.
- Amendments must be approved by a majority of those voting at the business meeting. With the approval of those present at such a meeting, the Executive Committee may choose to conduct the voting among the entire membership by mail.

IX. Dissolution

- The association may be dissolved only by a vote of the members present at a special meeting called for that purpose.
- {Amended 2009} On the dissolution of the association, all property remaining after the satisfaction of the association's obligations shall be distributed as the Executive Committee directs, choosing the recipients from non-profit Native American educational institutions whose goals are consistent with the interests of the association and who qualify as exempt within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

N.B. At the 12/29/90 business meeting, the membership directed the officers to proceed with incorporation. If the above document is passed by ASAIL members, the officers shall take such acceptance as authority to add to the by-laws immediately (without recourse to the above amending procedure) such language as incorporation may require.

- **A sample membership application;**

ASAIL MEMBERSHIP:

Thank you for your interest in the Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures (ASAIL). One of our primary purposes is to keep our members informed of recent publications and developments in the field of American Indian Literatures.

ASAIL's dues-paying membership is open to all individuals interested in furthering the goals of the Association.

Benefits of ASAIL membership include:

- Participation in ASAIL's active Listserv
- Voting privileges at the annual ASAIL meeting

- Financial conference support/stipends for graduate students and/or early-career faculty
- Subscription to *SAIL: Studies in American Indian Literatures*. Published quarterly, *SAIL* is the only journal in the United States focused exclusively on American Indian literatures. With a wide scope of scholars and creative contributors, the journal is always on the cutting edge of activity in the field.

Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures membership rates, including subscription to the journal *Studies in American Indian Literatures (SAIL)*, are as follows:

Membership Dues Schedule

- Standard Domestic \$70
- Standard International \$90
- Limited Income Domestic \$45
- Limited Income International \$70
- Sponsor \$100+
- Patron \$250+

Purchase Memberships

Links lead to external sites

Using Paypal (works internationally)

Using Square (limited to US, Canada, UK, Japan, Ireland, and France)

- A description of the dues structure