

# Minutes for Committee Members Meeting

**Date:** November 22, 2013

**Time:** 1:00 PM CDT

**Means:** Conference Call

**Attendees:** Ahmet Erdemir  
Lu Tian  
Joy Ku  
Lealem Mulugeta  
Jacob Barhak  
Tina Morrison

**Not Available:** Jerry Myers  
Gary An  
Marc Garbey  
Bill Lytton

1. Recap of November 13, 2013 Advisory Council meeting - 10 min  
[https://simtk.org/websvn/wsvn/cpms/doc/minutes/ac\\_20131113-minutes.pdf](https://simtk.org/websvn/wsvn/cpms/doc/minutes/ac_20131113-minutes.pdf)
2. Preventing spam on CPMS wiki - 10 min
3. Ten Simple Rules survey - 30 min
  - a. Survey trial progress
  - b. Survey updates
  - c. Establishing a data analysis group
4. Glossary - 5 min
  - a. Committee members are expected to provide (or complement) definitions for at least 2 terms before each Committee meeting:  
[http://wiki.simtk.org/cpms/Glossary\\_and\\_Definitions](http://wiki.simtk.org/cpms/Glossary_and_Definitions)
5. Other business - 5 min

## Review of Action Items from Previous Meeting:

### **All:**

- Help Beta Test the survey tool once it is launched **-Done**
- Fill-in definitions of two terms on the wiki, on a regular basis before each scheduled Committee meeting. **-Moving forward as planned**

### **Lealem:**

- Create a Wiki page that contains the personal profiles and photos for the Committee Executive and Advisory Council Members **-Done**
- Invite the Committee and Advisory Council members to participate in the survey “Beta Testing” **-Done**

### **Ahmet:**

- Draft survey invitation letters for the Committee Executive and Advisory Council Members **-Done**

### **Ahmet and Lealem:**

- Encourage Committee and Advisory Council members to register for a SimTK account if they have not done so already – **Done by all except one Advisory Council Member**

**Ahmet, Lealem and Jacob**

- During the internal survey data analysis, we will need to check the survey history log to ensure that it is not recording IP address and other personal information. – **Done**
  - i. *Jacob has done sufficient testing of the Google Forms to ensure there is nothing tracked that could lead to identification of specific participants. The new system being used through Stanford University (Qualtrics) has a special feature to turn off any subject tracking features, and Lealem has ensured that all tracking features are disabled. Now that Government Officials are not allowed to be involved in the survey design, and can only act as advisors for the survey design, the new custodians of the survey tool will need to ensure anonymity is maintained.*

**Lu:**

- Register for a SimTK account –**Done**
- Send short biosketch to Lealem and Ahmet -**Done**

**New Action Items:**

**All:**

- Continue contributing to the glossary
- Look at alternative survey tools in the mean

**Lealem:**

- Work with Joy to evaluate Qualtrics to see if it can help us address the randomization and authentication challenges we face with survey
- Has agreed to serve on the Data Analysis Group
- Prepare for IMSH panel presentation and put together panel members

**Tina and Lealem:**

- Help design a new question to help assess the context or perspective which the survey taker holds in order to allow appropriate analysis of the results and formulation of a guideline that is better representative of the broader community

**Joy:**

- Ensure that the Wiki can be locked down to prevent spams

**Notes:**

**1. Recap of November 13, 2013 Advisory Council meeting**

- Ahmet gave an overview of the Advisory Council (AC) meeting. For more detailed information, please refer to the advisory council meeting minutes located at: [https://simtk.org/websvn/wsvn/cpms/doc/minutes/ac\\_20131113-minutes.pdf](https://simtk.org/websvn/wsvn/cpms/doc/minutes/ac_20131113-minutes.pdf). In general, the following points about the AC meeting were highlighted:
  - Reviewed action items from the previous advisory council meeting and current progress of the committee
  - A number of the AC Members did not receive the survey notice, so the survey was resent to all members and the survey due date was extended
  - Various elements of the survey were discussed, including the population whom we plan to distribute it to, and the resolution of the importance level ranking system and how we arrived at the 0-5 scale instead of a more granular scale. In addition we talked about randomization of the questions, similar to the concerns that the Committee Members (CM) have raised.
  - Analysis of the survey results was also raised as an issue that needed to be dealt with. This resulted in the formation of a data analysis group to ensure that the Committee appropriately interpret the results of the survey. Martin Steele and Lu Tian were identified as strong candidates to be a part of the group based on their professional background and interests in data analysis.
  - The commitment levels of the AC and CM were reviewed to remind everyone what was expected from everyone

- A proposal was made by Ahmet and Lealem to implement a performance evaluation mechanism for the membership roster in anticipation of the next election and to address any issues there may be present. However, the AC indicated that this might be overkill for now and the Committee should deal with things on a case by case basis until a more formal process is deemed necessary.

## 2. Preventing spam on CPMS wiki

- All Wiki pages are being locked to prevent edits without first logging in to the SimTK site so that the pages are currently public read only. Joy will verify if the pages can be locked down successfully.
- Jacob indicated that there is value in having a more open access to cultivate more public participation. In this light, Ahmet suggested the possibility of having an open access wiki page for each section of the Wiki to allow public contributions. To prevent bot spams, we may need to implement an authentication method (e.g. reCAPTCHA).
- In general, the goal is to have the site as open as possible, but we need to think carefully about how we implement openness to ensure that it does not interfere with our day-to-day activities.
- Joy pointed out that we can add a filtering mechanism to prevent inappropriate postings like ad placements. In addition the Wiki page has a built in mechanism that times out the editing feature to prevent excessive number of submissions from a single IP address.
- If possible, it would be good to implement a reCAPTCHA so that we can accept public contribution without the need to log in as a SimTK user. This would allow contribution from interested parties who do not have a SimTK account.
- On a positive note, the fact that the site got attacked also suggests that we are becoming more visible

## 3. Ten Simple Rules Survey

- Lu asked what the decision of was regarding randomization of the survey questions - The general consensus is that there is a desire to randomize the questions. Given that Google Forms does not allow for automatic randomization, there were several ideas proposed to overcome this limitation and ensure that we do not receive skewed results from the survey based on the order of the questions. These include:
  - Build several surveys with different question orders, and we would distribute a single web link that uses a script to randomly assign one of the surveys to the survey taker.
  - We can provide some instructional text to the survey taker to indicate that, even though all of the rules presented in the survey may be important for establishing M&S credibility, the Committee is interested in identifying the top ten most important rules. Therefore, the survey taker should be focused on identifying what they consider to be the top ten most important rules. Consequently, they should aim to assign a score of 4 or 5 for about ten of the 33 rules presented.
  - We can provide some instructional text at the end of the survey to encourage the survey taker to use the back button to review their response to ensure that they've prioritized their responses appropriately.
- Randomization using a scripted page presents the issue that it may be blocked by different browsers or anti-spyware software. So Ahmet suggested the possibility of sending different versions of the survey with different invitation letters. However, this presents the possibility of making the survey takers more identifiable. So this idea was abandoned.
- Given that we have been experiencing spam issues on the Wiki site, it is possible that we may encounter some malicious activity with the survey. So various authentication methods were discussed to minimize the chance of malicious activity:

- The possibility of using a dedicated webpage with reCAPTCHA authentication and survey randomization code was considered. Given that (1) SimTK cannot host a site like this, (2) using scripted page can present new problems due to browser compatibility issues, and (3) finding a server space that can host something like this may be difficult, it was decided that this was not a good solution.
    - If we are not able to implement reCAPTCHA in Google Forms, we could implement test questions to authenticate the survey taker is a person as recommended in the Google Forms developer forum discussions
    - The other option is to not be over protective, and allow the survey to be filled out as is and figure out a way to differentiate the good contributions vs those that are not good contributions – this is would be very challenging to do
  - Joy made the suggestion to consider other free survey tools like Survey Monkey if we are not fixed on using Google Forms.
    - The challenges of using other survey tools with free accounts is that they generally have a limitation on the number and type of questions that can be asked, as well as the number of responses we can obtain from the survey. Based on what we require, we will need to pay for an upgraded survey account. The Committee members were encouraged to look into the different types of survey tools to assess their feasibility in terms of features and cost.
    - Joy indicated that Simbios typically uses Survey Monkey at a reasonable cost for their surveys. In addition, she has access to Qualtrics, which offered all of the features we need and more. However, she is not able to commit substantial amount of time to help rebuild the survey. So she offered to explore the possibility of giving some of the CM access to the full version of the Qualtrics. Lealem and Ahmet volunteered to help with this effort if they are given full access to Qualtrics.
  - Phase 2 of the survey still needs to happen once all of the inputs provided from the Beta test have been incorporated in to the survey design
  - Tina raised the point that we may want to think about teasing out from the survey takers' context of use, end goal or perspective regarding M&S in Healthcare. This can help us appropriately interpret the results and formulate appropriate guidelines on Credible Practice of M&S in Healthcare.
  - In this light, Ahmet proposed the possibility of adding a question that inquires how the survey taker intends to use M&S in the Healthcare domain.
  - Lealem also pointed out that in formulating such a question or questions, we need to be careful to not try to capture all scenarios of applications or types of model. Attempting to do so would add a level of complexity that may make it very difficult to implement our end goal of establishing a guideline that is meaningful to the greater community.
  - Lealem and Tina will work together to formulate a question that captures the context, goal or perspective of the survey taker in terms of applying M&S in the healthcare domain. This question will likely be presented at the beginning of the survey.
  - Jacob raised the point that, if there is a desire to add a question regarding the context within which the survey taker is filling out the survey, we may need to drop one of the last questions to reduce the possibility of identification. However, none of the questions that are being asked are not personally identifiable questions according to the CFR 45. So there is no need to drop any of the questions.
  - ***Members of the data analysis group are:*** Lu, Jacob, Tina, Lealem and Martin

#### 4. Glossary

- Tina was able to add new words, but she was not able to create and link a new page to add the definitions for the new term. Ahmet and Jacob provided verbal instructions on how to

create a new page, but Ahmet will implement a page template page to simplify this workflow.

- Ahmet, Lealem, Tina and Jacob have been adding to the glossary – others are encouraged to add two definitions words to the glossary before every meeting
- It is also important to note that everyone can continue to add to other people's definitions. The goal is to capture a definition that is more encompassing of the broad community the Committee serves.

## **5. Other business**

- Jacob has notified John Rice that the Committee will not be use focus groups for the survey implementation. However, the Committee will eventually release the raw data to the public. At that time, focus groups may use the data to analyze the results as they see fit.
- Jacob brought up the issue regarding ISPOR's efforts to publish various guidelines, which he has some concerns about regarding the content they plan to include. He asked Joy if it was alright to continue raising his concerns on the initial forum post that she started (<https://simtk.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=848&t=4391>). Jacob also indicated that he is being more assertive with them and it is possible that they might not like his level of critical feedback. Joy indicated that she did not mind, but she knew nothing about ISPOR and has no strong feeling about the organization. Lealem and Ahmet indicated that Jacob is free to continue his conversations, but he needs to make it clear that the statements presented on the forum post are his opinions and not the positions of the any of the Committee. In addition, it is important maintain civility throughout the discussions. Jacob agreed, and requested that the Committee let him know if he steps out of line.
- Lealem is going to IMSH, and is in the process of preparing for the panel. Current potential panel members are Jacob and Joy.