HISTORY OF THE BIOLOGICAL MODELING SPECIALTY SECTION

The formation of the Biological Modeling Specialty Section was initiated by Dr. Michael Pelekis with the specific intent to:

- Provide a forum for the interaction of toxicologists and other professionals involved in Biological Modeling.
- Promote the application of Biological Models in Risk Assessment.
- Advocate the development of sound science-based guidelines for the development of Biological Models.
- Create libraries of model codes and parameter values used in the models.
- Encourage exchange of information among members of the Society involved in Biological Modeling, and
- Organize educational programs, which emphasize new developments and issues in Biological Modeling.

In March 1999, during the 38th Annual SOT meeting in New Orleans he inquired the SOT staff about the procedures that had to be followed to form a new Specialty Section. He also approached Dr. Marina Evans, who enthusiastically supported the idea of forming the Specialty Section. The SOT informally endorsed the formation of the new Specialty Section and Michael Pelekis and Marina Evans became members of the interim Executive Committee of the new Specialty Section.

Between March and May 1999, Michael and Marina proceeded to:

- Select a name for the new Specialty Section
- Write the objectives of the new Specialty Section
- Recruit fifty SOT members who agreed in writing to become members of the new Specialty Section
- Write the by-laws and a three-year plan of the new Specialty Section

The name chosen initially for the new Specialty Section was Mechanistic Modeling Specialty Section. At that time, it was important to differentiate this type of modeling from others such as, ecological modeling and exposure modeling. Following the write-up of the Objectives of the new Specialty Section, Michael Pelekis and Marina Evans contacted SOT members involved in Biological Modeling in person, by phone and email. They were asked to join and support the new Specialty Section and make suggestions about its mission. Excerpts of the feedback received are shown below:
"I think something like this is needed. ... When I first heard of your proposal my reaction was that this area is covered by the Risk Assessment Specialty Section (RASS), but really this is not the case - the RASS does not focus on mechanistically-motivated models. My suggestion to you is to consider forming a Specialty Section on mechanism-based models - this could encompass various kinds of dosimetry and tissue response models."

"I have some concern about overlap with the Risk Assessment Specialty Section. ... So I will say "Yes" (to the formation of BMSS) provided that these distinctions are made clear in the proposal to establish the Specialty Section".

"Thank you for asking. I assume that also "regular" PBPK Modeling is included. In any case, this is a good idea and yes, I would be very interested."

The SOT Council discussed the request for the authorization of the Specialty Section on May 25, 1999. It conditionally approved the request and encouraged the interim Executive Committee to begin soliciting nominations for the Executive Committee for the Spring 2000 ballot as well as to plan the program for the Specialty Section Meeting which would take place during the 39th Annual SOT Meeting in Philadelphia. The formation of the Specialty Section was formally announced to the SOT members on June 15, 1999 with the mailing of the Preliminary Program for the 2000 Annual SOT meeting.

By the end of May 1999, 50 SOT members had agreed to join the BMSS. On June 3, 1999, the (i) Bylaws, (ii) Purpose and Objectives, (iii) Three-year Plan, and (iv) Charter Membership, were submitted to the SOT.

In August 2, 1999, the SOT Council notified the interim Executive Committee that the request for authorization of the Specialty Section had been approved with one major modification. The name of the new Specialty Section would be Biological Modeling Specialty Section (BMSS), not Mechanistic Modeling Specialty Section. The Council felt that the new name encompassed more activities than the previous one. The Interim Executive Committee accepted the change and proceeded to recruit members to run for officers of the new Specialty Section in an election that was to be held in early 2000. The ballot with the names of the nominees for
Officers of the Biological Modeling Specialty Section was emailed by the SOT to the Charter members in February 3, 2000 with a deadline for voting of March 6, 2000. The winners were announced at the inaugural Annual Reception of the Biological Modeling Specialty Section, which took place on March 21, 2000 at the 39th SOT Annual Meeting.

Acknowledgement

The BMSS is grateful for the assistance provided by Ann Kerstetter, former SOT staff member and Dr. Kendall B. Wallace, former SOT Council Liaison for Specialty Sections. Their efforts made it possible to meet the many deadlines and expedited the formation of the BMSS.