Mensa 101 – the Basics

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A Leadership Development Workshop
By Lori Norris / John Neemidge
THAT CHICKEN IS SO TOUGH
MENSA WANTS TO PUT IT ON THEIR ADMISSIONS EXAM
History

- Mensa was founded in Oxford, England in 1946.
- There were a few American members of Mensa between 1951 and 1959.
- In August 1960, Mensa authorized the founding of a NYC regional group with the 22 US Mensans.
- This was the first chapter outside Britain.
Mensa

Mensa International

National Officers / National Committees

Regional (10 regions)

Local Groups

Events
The Chairman-Elect is Bjorn Liljevist from Sweden, Director of Administration: Isabella Holz from Germany; Treasurer: Rudi Challupner from Austria, and Director of Development: Bibiana Balanyi from Hungary.

The Director of Small National Mensas (DSNM) was elected by the members of the International Board of Directors and is Mark Dettinger from Switzerland. All terms begin on July 1, 2019 and last until June 30, 2021.

Also included in the Executive Committee are the chairmen of the largest three national Mensas, or their proxies: America: LaRae Bakerink (Chairman) British Isles: Chris Leek (proxy) Germany: Peter Froehler (proxy).
MENSA INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS

- 36 Full National Mensas
- 2 Provisional National Mensas
- 9 Emerging Mensas
- Direct International Mensans (DIMs)
NATIONAL MENSA MILESTONES

No National Mensa Group

- Mensans in countries with no official Mensa status become Direct International Members (DIMs) of Mensa International
NATIONAL MENSA MILESTONES

Emerging Mensa Group

• Mensans in countries with Emerging Mensa status remain Direct International Members (DIMs) of Mensa International

• The country handles its own administration, including testing, by its organizing committee of at least 5 members

• There must be monthly social gatherings, a newsletter, at least 50 members and other criteria
EMERGING MENSAS

Bosnia & Herzegovina
Cyprus
India
Indonesia
Luxembourg
Rep. of Northern Macedonia
Pakistan
Philippines
Taiwan
NATIONAL MENSA MILESTONES

Provisional Mensa Group

- Mensans in countries with Provisional Mensa status become members of their National Mensa group
- An elected board is in place
- National constitution approved by members and international Constitution Review Officer
- Appointment of a qualified National Supervisory Psychologist (NSP)
- Appointment of an Ombudsmen
- Annual business meeting takes place
- More than 100 members
- Payment of quarterly component to Mensa International
PROVISIONAL MENSAS

Colombia
108 members

Mexico
403 members
NATIONAL MENSA MILESTONES

Full National Mensa

- Continue to meet all the requirements of a Provisional Mensa group plus the following

- Have at least 250 current members

- Has held at least 2 Annual Business Meetings and will continue to hold them every year after achieving FNM status

- Has held at least one Annual Business Meeting after recognition as a Provisional Mensa
FULL NATIONAL MENSAS
>5,000 MEMBERS

American
46,600 members

Britain
19,000 members

Germany
14,000 members

Sweden
7,000 members
LARGEST MEMBERSHIP PER MILLION POPULATION

Sweden

7,000 members/10 million pop.

= 700 members per million
FULL NATIONAL MENSAS <5,000-2,000

Netherlands
4,279 members

France
3,807 members

Czech Republic

Hungary
3,512 members

Japan
3,460 members

Finland
3,202 members

Spain
2,414 members

Australia
2,178 members

Canada
2,034 members
FULL NATIONAL MENSAS < 2,000

- Argentina 319
- Austria 817
- Belgium 533
- Brazil 560
- Bulgaria 515
- Croatia 675
- Denmark 1,750
- Greece 1,000
- Hong Kong 709
- Italy 1,815
- Malaysia 850
- Montenegro 252
- New Zealand 634
- Norway 1,797
- Poland 1,479
- Romania 822
- Serbia 1,042
- Singapore 1,434
- Slovakia 635
- Slovenia 300
- South Africa 1,373
- Switzerland 1,423
MENSA CHINA (DISBANDED)

- Mensa International tried to develop Mensa China and a Chinese Mensan contributed his own funds to launch the group and hold testing sessions in 4 major cities.

- Unfortunately, China’s political climate does not understand the concept of not-for-profit organizations so Mensa China was disbanded.

- Chinese Mensans are now DIMs (Direct International Mensans).

- An ambitious Mensan from Shanghai, Ayawawa, has hosted 2 successful year end RGs in Shanghai.
• 39% of Australian Mensans are under 20 years old

• This is dragging the Australian average age down to 32.2 (in 2018)

• This presents logistical problems as Australian Mensa is forced to develop programs for its younger members
MENSA BELGIUM

- In April 2019, King Filip of Belgium has bestowed upon Mensa Be the title of "Koninklijke Vereniging" (Royal Society) because of its social value and more than 50 years of existence

- Wim Proost, Chairman of Mensa Belgium, was ceremoniously presented with the proclamation from the governor of Antwerp, Dr Cathy Berx
MENSA CZECH REPUBLIC

• Mensa Czech Republic is probably the most successful European Mensa group and Mensa is a household name

• It runs a Mensa charter school in Prague to which parents clamour to have their children accepted

• It runs a Logical Olympics competition every year which commences in local schools and had 61,000 registered participants in 2018

• Winners in the 3 age categories are publicly celebrated
More information

International Gifted Youth Programs

Saturday at 6:00
Membership Dashboard

Current Membership: 46,074

Active Local Groups: 127
Special Interest Groups: 124

Average Age:
- Member: 50
- Officer: 60
- New Member: 20
Things of Interest

JOIN
- Take the admission test
- Submit test scores
- Gifted Youth admission
- Rejoin American Mensa

ABOUT
- Our Story
- Gifted Youth
- Mensa Foundation

RESOURCES
- Request materials
- Newsletter upload
- Testing Calendar
- Scholarship resources

MY MENSA
- My Profile
- My Local Group
- New Member Primer
- Benefits and Discounts

FOLLOW US
Mensa Lingo

- AG
- AMC
- AML
- ASIE (or CASIE)
- Inside AML
- LDW
- Local Group
- LocSec

- M
- MIL or MI
- NO or National Office
- RG
- RVC
- SIG
- SIGHT
- Young Mensan (YM)
What does Mensa mean (maybe)?

• Latin - *mensa* means "table"
• *mens* means "mind"
• *mensis* means "month"
• So a monthly meeting of great minds around a table.
Governance

- Laws
  - NY, federal, state, local
- International Constitution
- AML’s Bylaws
- MI ASIEs
- AML’s ASIEs
- Local group bylaws ASIEs
National Officers (AMC)

- 5 Nationally elected:
  - Chair
  - 1\textsuperscript{st} Vice Chair
  - 2\textsuperscript{nd} Vice Chair
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary

- 10 regionally elected (RVCs)
National Officers (AMC)

• 4 appointed (no vote, but a voice):
  – Membership Officer
  – Communications Officer
  – Development Officer
  – Director of Science & Education
National Committees

• Appointed by AMC
• Many types of committees: listed on AML website (contacts; AMC; Committees)
• Bylaws, Communications, Publications Recognition Program, Election, Licensing, Leadership Development, Gifted Youth, Nominating, Risk Management . . .
Regional

- RVC – elected (see ASIE Appendix 26 for more details)
- Appointed by RVC (examples)
  - Assistant RVC
  - Regional Scholarship Chair
  - Regional LDW Coordinator
  - Regional Gifted Children Coordinator
  - Regional Gen Y Coordinator
  - Regional Social Media Coordinator
Local Groups

• Currently (as of mid-June) there are 125 Local Groups in American Mensa.

• Almost all have at least some organizational differences unique to that local group. But there are many similarities.

• For most members, their Local Group is their primary or sole in-person contact with American Mensa.
• Local Groups are responsible for:
  – Publishing a regular newsletter
  – Conducting their own elections
  – Updating their bylaws
  – Managing (and annual reporting) of finances
Local Groups:

- Host testing sessions
- Host gatherings
- Award scholarships
- Participate in group-based activities (CultureQuest, Mensa Cares!, etc)
- And many many other Mensa activities
Local Officers

National tracks a number of local officer positions.

Local groups are free to have other officers as well.

Some tracked positions are mandatory; many are optional but encouraged.

Some are elected, some are appointed. There are LDWs at this annual gathering specific to many of these roles.
- Local Secretary (LocSec) / President
- Vice LocSec / Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership Officer
- Member-At-Large
- Newsletter Editor
- Circulation Officer
- Area Coordinator
- Ombudsman
- Gifted Youth Coordinator
- Scholarship Chair
- SIGHT Coordinator
- Web Contact
- Testing Coordinator
- Proctor
- And there are a few others (public relations coordinator, arbiter, social media coordinator, etc)
Structure

- Minimum Standard Bylaws (MSB): describe what a local group must be and must do. Always part of any group’s bylaws.

- Model Bylaws: Present one implementation of the MSB

- Individual group bylaws: Must meet MSB; may or may not take Model Bylaws as a starting point

- Unusual situations: local groups separately incorporated, groups with very old bylaws, bylaw errors, etc

- RVC override authority

- All this creates a diversity of local groups with many different approaches
  - But local groups have many consistent things too
• Local Groups are funded by National at $0.85/member/month. Last updated September 2015.
• Groups also receive $1 for each new and rejoining member.
• Local Groups receive $15 per test plus a $25 site stipend for every month they test.
• From this Local Groups are intended to be able to publish a newsletter and conduct activities.
• Local Groups have a variety of ways to control spending:
  – Some members receive their newsletter electronically
  – Second family members do not need to receive issues unless they contain election materials
  – The bare minimum requirements can be met by quarterly mailings of a postcard.
Local Groups can also fundraise:

- By soliciting contributions
- To the group’s general fund
- To offset the cost of a specific thing (party, scholarship, etc)
- By running events (Regional Gatherings, etc) that return a profit to the group
- By soliciting community donations (note: aside from a very few exceptions LGs are not 501c3’s).
•For more on money:

•Saturday at 10:30 a.m.
MENSA EVENTS
AMERICAN MENSA AGS

• Our AG is home to the Annual Business Meeting which we are required to hold annually.

• American Mensa AGs attract between 1,700 – 2,500 registrants, making them the largest annual Mensa events globally.

• The 2020 AG will take place from July 1 – 5 in Kansas City, MO

• 2021 – Houston, TX (more later)

• 2022 - Reno, NV

• Does your local group want to host an AG? Talk to the Events Committee.
• **EMAG** is the largest Mensa gathering in Europe and is typically held in August over 3 days

• The **2019 EMAG** will be held in Ghent, Belgium from August 7 – 11

• The **2020 EMAG** will be held in Brno, Czech Republic

• The **2021 EMAG** will be held in Aarhus in Denmark
ASIAN MENSA GATHERING - AMG

- **AMG** is the largest Mensa gathering in Asia and is typically held in October but moves around due to weather constraints

- The 2019 AMG was held in Auckland & Rotorua, New Zealand

- The 2020 AMG will be held in Seoul, South Korea
MENSA IBD MEETING

• The Mensa International Board of Directors Meeting (IBD) is normally held annually in October
• Features a 2 ½ day international board meeting with entertainment and tours built around it
• Held in European countries but every 3rd year it is held in a different region of the world
• The 2019 IBD will be in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia October 10 -13
• The 2020 IBD will be in Montenegro (2021 Houston)
MENSA 2016 IBD IN JAPAN

- The 2016 IBD in Kyoto, Japan celebrated the 70th anniversary of Mensa
MENSA WORLD GATHERING

• A World Gathering (WG) is a Mensa Gathering aimed at attracting worldwide Mensans

• The first WG was in 2006 at Walt Disney World in Florida

• A second WG is planned for August 2021 in Houston – it will incorporate both the American Mensa AG and IBD
OTHER MENSA PROGRAMS
SIGHT PROGRAM

- **S**ervice of **I**nformation, **G**uidance and **H**ospitality to **T**ravelers

- Allows you to contact Mensans in national or international destinations

- Allows you to host or provide hospitality to travelling Mensans

- Contact the national SIGHT coordinator for details

- There is also a good Facebook page called **Mensa SIGHT Program** to fast track communication
SIGS

• Special Interest Groups

• Subgroups of Mensans interested in specialized topics

• 3 Canadian SIGs are:
  • YAM (Young Adult Mensans) SIG
  • MOO (M Outdoors Ontario) SIG
  • MEL (Mensa Entrepreneurs & Leaders) SIG

• Look up available SIGs online
S.I.G.H.T. & SIGs

- Tomorrow at 10:30 a.m.
- The National Coordinators will be giving a presentation and, hopefully, will be able to answer all your questions.
Mensa Cares!

• Mensans have long been involved in community service.
MARCH 2
ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY
CHARLOTTE - BLUE RIDGE MENSA

APRIL 7 - 13
DONATION DRIVE
MENSA IN GEORGIA

APRIL 7 - 13
THE 4 B’S PROJECT
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON MENSA

APRIL 10
NNEMAP FOOD PANTRY
COLUMBUS AREA MENSA
APRIL 11
MEALS FOR CHILDREN
CHICAGO AREA MENSA

APRIL 13
HOUSTON FOOD BANK
GULF COAST MENSA

APRIL 13
FEEDING TAMPA BAY
TAMPA BAY MENSA

APRIL 13
ADOPT-A-PARK CLEAN UP
DAYTON AREA MENSA
APRIL 13
NICU BABY DONATION BAGS
PIEDMONT AREA MENSA

APRIL 27
SAVE THE BAY SHORELINE CLEANUP
RHODE ISLAND MENSA

MAY 4
DRUMLIN FARM
BOSTON MENSA

MAY 11
CAM CARES: RIVERSWEEP
CLEVELAND AREA MENSA
Culture Quest®

• Each April, American Mensa members team up to compete in a test of their cultural literacy.

• On a single day at the same time across the U.S. and Canada, they compete for cash prizes and, of course, bragging rights.
Mind Games®

WINNER

MENSA SELECT®
MENSA INTERNATIONAL PHOTO CUP

• An international Mensa photography contest

• Each year has a different theme

• Canadian Lorraine Gallant placed 3rd in the 2018 Photocup where the theme was **Brilliance**

• 2019 theme is **Optical Illusion**
MENSA MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Mensa’s stated purposes are to:

• identify and foster human intelligence for the benefit of humanity
• encourage research in the nature, characteristics and uses of intelligence
• promote stimulating intellectual and social opportunities for its members
MENSA EDUCATION & RESEARCH FOUNDATION

• Mensa Foundation is based in Texas and is a philanthropic nonprofit 501(c)(3) org.

• Committed to the pursuit of excellence in human intelligence

• Mission & strategic focus are directed at scholarships, education and awards

• Publishes the Mensa Research Journal

• Sponsors award-winning educational activities such as the Mensa for Kids website
MENSA FOUNDATION
AWARDS

• Copper Black Award for Creative Achievement
• Distinguished Teacher Award
• Excellence in Research Award
• Intellectual Benefits to Society Award
• Lifetime Achievement Award
• Scholarships
  • American
  • International
MENSA FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER

Mr. Mensa

• The pageant is a highlight at the American AG

• Billed as being proportionate parts prowess, parody and pandering

• Proceeds directly benefit the Mensa Foundation Scholarship Program
MR. MENSA CANADA CONTESTANTS

2011 Plaid Shirt Segment

2018 Steeplechase Segment
The Foundation

- More later today.
• Thanks to Vicki Herd – Mensa Canada’s President for loaning portions of this program.