

Graduate Students' Report
Submitted to: SSSP Board of Directors
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Graduate Students' Meeting

12 students (including Melanie and I) attended the graduate students' meeting. Significantly fewer students participated this year than last year. The meeting took place in the same room as the board meeting, which meant that the graduate student meeting didn't begin on time.

Additionally, a multi-division reception with complimentary food and drinks was hosted at the same time as our meeting, and I know that a number of students elected to attend this instead. Further, the list of graduate students I had in February when I was inviting people to join our listserv does not reflect the students who joined the society after this time. Therefore, the messages I'd sent about the meeting and the social did not reach many of the current graduate student membership.

Topics for discussion at the meeting included:

- a) Student concerns/experiences – Many people expressed concern about the high prices for accommodation and food. Others were surprised by the decrease in food 'goodies' offered throughout the conference. I shared some information about the high catering costs at this hotel, and we shared tips for finding funding through the organization. It was also at this time that I learned that all but three of the people attending the meeting were not members of the SSSP Graduate Student Listserv. I collected addresses in order to invite them when I return.
- b) The Newsletter – My goal was to encourage graduate student participation and direct them to particular interest items such as the "Job Talk" column, preliminary findings section, and student column. With Ken's permission, I also gave out his email contact information.
- c) The proposed fees increase – I presented the background information to the proposed changes as I understood them from the board meeting and then circulated the proposed fee changes. While meeting attendees felt that either a 5\$ or 10\$ increase would be appropriate for most students, there was some concern that there would be people for whom an extra 5\$ would make a difference. Our contention was that there needs to be a means for those people to be members also.

Recommendations:

1. Ensure that people are invited to join the listserv more than once a year. It seems timely to invite people after each meeting and also with an updated list after the preliminary program is announced and about a month or two before each meeting. This ensures that listserv posts are getting to active SSSP members.
2. Have the graduate student meeting in a different room than the board meeting

Graduate Students' Social

The social was held at the Madison Pub in the hotel this year directly after our meeting. It was very well attended, and people seemed to enjoy spending time with one another. I had a problem determining which of the people who attended the social were actually graduate student members as many had arrived at the bar before our meeting ended. Most people were not wearing their name-tags. It was also challenging to ensure that food and drink were fairly

distributed among attendees. I collected food orders and ordered all of the food myself. I also attempted to coordinate drink orders in “rounds” so that everyone who attended got at least one drink and something to eat. This is a lot of work for a the graduate student representative, but the pub atmosphere tends to be more conducive to socializing.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to host the social in a pub
2. In the announcement of the social and the meeting, the graduate student representative should ask people to wear their name-tags, so as to ensure that attendees are actually SSSP members.
3. The graduate student contact with the bar should attempt to meet the bar manager before the social so that the bar knows not to serve people until the contact person arrives (so as to ensure that those who attend the meeting before the social reap the same benefits as those who choose to only attend the social).