

July 18, 2011

To: Michele Koontz, Administrative Officer

From: Stephani Williams, Chair of Special Division Chairs

RE: Council of Division Chairs Report

This report highlights activities and thoughts of both me and of the Council of Division Chairs during 2010-2011. That. I will update this report after the second meeting of the Council in order to share the thoughts and concerns of Division Chairs with the Executive Office and Board of Directors.

1. First, I am grateful to Michele for all her support over the past year. The Division Chairs also express their thanks for her patience and assistance.
2. I would like to acknowledge Kendra Jason, the 09-11 Chair of the Labor Studies Division for her exemplary work. Kendra was almost always the first to submit her work, never needed a reminder, and did a wonderful job of involving her members, and is passionate about the SSSP. I found out after the Annual Meeting last year that Kendra is a graduate student; she will be finishing her Ph.D. this year. I would encourage all of you to keep her name in mind, for appointed committee work in the future (you will also see her name on the nominations slate when presented on Sunday).
3. As I indicated in my report last year the Division Chairs greeted the news of a change in the nominations process enthusiastically. Rather than a true election of division chairs to the committee, 3 individuals volunteered and they were "elected" by their peers. I will discuss more about the nominations process in a later report.
4. Last year I noted that the biggest surprise to me after completing my first year of office was how many divisions were not fulfilling their responsibilities to their members, or the Society. I spent a significant amount of time last year discussing the roles and responsibilities and the importance of communicating with their members, followed by dozens of emails that included samples or models to help them fulfill their responsibilities effectively and on time. While no longer surprising, it is still disappointing and frustrating, the number of emails that Michele, Sarah, and I have to send out (multiple reminders for every activity), and how many responsibilities still do not get completed. While we did make some progress, I plan to once again communicate to the Chairs the importance of fulfilling **all** Division responsibilities.
 - a. At the end of the 2009 meeting, 3 divisions had not yet updated their mission statements. As of July 18, All divisions have completed this task.

- b. 7 Division Chairs failed to have representation at one or more of their meeting responsibilities (division chair meetings, business meeting, program committee meeting, resolutions meeting).
- c. 2 Division Chairs did not submit budgets.
- d. Last year 6 Divisions had not produced a newsletter since the 2009 meeting, this year only 1 division failed to produce a newsletter. 8 did not produce the desired goal of 2 newsletters to communicate with their members. 4 Divisions produced a Fall, Spring, and Summer newsletter. We definitely made progress in this area.
- e. 5 Divisions did not secure nominees for a new division chair. The Administrative Office and I had to send out email blasts and solicit nominees, again holding last minute elections.
- f. We have 13 incoming Chairs, so I hope that we can get these Chair's off to a good start, and reduce the number of Divisions not currently meeting the requirements listed in the bylaws.

The general sentiment expressed to Michele and I (despite being provided the Roles and Responsibilities handout, going over it at the meeting, and receiving multiple emails with detailed instructions is that they are not clear of the expectations, responsibilities, or due dates). A second issue is that it is difficult to accomplish the tasks with their other academic/professional responsibilities. In response to those comments and complaints, over the last two years we revised the roles and responsibilities handout, I have added more time during the Annual Meeting to review the roles and responsibilities, I added sample language and other examples within my emails this year to provide them with more tools to be successful and we have modified or suggested alternative scheduling of some activities (like division elections) to try to help ease their workload.

Michele and I will continue to work closely this year in trying to find creative and alternative ways to communicate the importance of meeting these responsibilities and to help them effectively achieve success and growth for their respective divisions.