

SSSP Membership and Outreach Committee Report
Submitted by: Yvonne A. Braun, Chair
Submitted to: SSSP Board of Directors
Annual Meeting, Denver, August 2012

A. June Membership Reports

Total paid current membership in SSSP is currently 1498 up 1.1% from this time last year (n=1482). Combining current paid members with 2011 members who have not yet renewed membership is currently at 2122, up 4.5% from this time last year (when the number was 2026).

The largest category of dues paying members is, as in the past, among our student members (n=578), whose dues rate is \$30. The second largest dues category is the \$85,000+ where the dues rate is \$210 (n=172 members). The third largest dues category is the category of “first time professional members” with a dues rate at \$45 (n=128 members). This is followed closely by the category of \$55,000 to \$64,999 with a dues rate at \$150 (n=123 members).

Our membership (N=2122) is predominantly based in the United States (n=1889). Other members include those residing in Canada (n=130), Mexico (n=1) and other countries (n=102).

The Special Problems Divisions with the largest memberships are as follows:

1. Poverty, Class, and Inequality (n=513)

2. Racial and Ethnic Minorities (n=455)

3. Conflict, Social Action, and Change (n=350)

The membership for these Divisions has continued to decrease, down from last year when these numbers were recorded as 667, 589 and 466 respectively.

In considering these numbers, it is important to note some recent changes to division membership policies and fees. At the 2011 Annual Meeting, the Board approved the following change to the membership to special problems divisions: Included in Society membership, each member would receive one division membership, and student members would receive two division memberships. Additional division membership would be available at the cost of \$10 per division. Prior to this policy, Membership in three Special Problems Divisions was free; membership in additional divisions cost \$2 each.

Despite declining numbers of division memberships, the effect of this policy and fee change has been clear and positive in terms of revenue. In 2012, 551 members paid extra division fees totaling \$10,516 in revenue. By contrast, prior to this policy, extra division fees generated \$994 in revenue in 2011 and \$1,044 in 2010.

B. 2012 Sustaining Membership Report

This year we have 39 members in the “sustaining membership” category paying the \$1,200/\$1,700 dues rate. This represents a slight increase from last year when the number was 35.

C. 2012 Promotion Report

This year, Michele Smith Koontz, Héctor Delgado, Wendy Simonds, Lisa East, Sharon Shumaker, and Kelley Flatford helped to implement the membership outreach strategies that were revamped in 2010 and 2011. We continued to move away from costlier (i.e. hard copy) strategies. This year’s promotion campaign continues last year’s arc of success with significant gains in comparison with 2011. For example:

- There is no net loss on our membership campaign, as was also true last year. This is compared with \$606.24 in 2010.
- The total revenue generated this year was \$14,425 compared to \$7,920 in 2011 and \$1,185 in 2010. This is up 45% from 2011.
- We recruited 356 members through this campaign in comparison to 192 members last year. This also represents a noteworthy 46% increase from the previous year.

Costs and yield of various elements of the campaign are further

detailed below.

Promotion Summary	2012	2011
Total Expenses	624.19	510.15
Total Members Received	356	192
Total Dues Generated	14,425	7,920
Promotional Costs Not Covered by Campaign	None	None

- Promotional efforts included online advertising with Wiley and on listserves. 200 brochures and flyers were printed and distributed at various meetings, through current members, through *Social Problems* and at the 2011 Annual meeting. Fees and postage for these promotions totaled \$444.19. From this hard work, 252 new members were generated, resulting in \$10,690 in dues revenue and a real gain for the promotion campaign. This is up 49.4% from last year.
- Three e-mail blasts were organized in January 2012 to departmental chairpersons, graduate students and the membership. Webpage set up charged for this work was \$180. This resulted in 104 new members and \$3,735 in dues revenue. This is up 33% from last year and demonstrates another success story.

- We have planned a “New members” breakfast at the Denver meeting on Thursday, August 16 from 7.15 - 8.15 am.

Obviously, the new brochure re-designed by this year’s and last year’s teams was a significant improvement and, as hoped, the new promotion and recruitment strategy reaped the benefits of increased membership and revenue. Targeted efforts to outreach to graduate students, current members, and through existing networks were particularly successful. The team should be congratulated on the success of this year’s campaign.

D. Comparison Membership Report, June 2002- June 2012

Total paid current membership is currently 1498. This is a 6.4% decrease from the year 2002 (n=1595). During this ten year period, the highest recorded number of members was 1772 in 2007. The lowest recorded number of paid members was 1394 members in 2010. As stated earlier, this year the largest category of dues paying members was among our student members (n=578). In 2002, this number was 479. The second largest dues category for this year was the \$85,000+ category with 172 members. In 2002, the second largest dues category was in the \$45,000-\$54,999 dues category with 185 members. This year, the third largest dues category is the category of “first time professional members” with a dues rate at \$45 (n=128 members). This is followed closely by the category of \$55,000 to \$64,999 with a dues rate at \$150 (n=123 members).

In 2002, the third largest dues category was \$35,000-\$44,999 dues category (n= 157). This is followed closely by the category of \$75,000-84,999 at a dues rate of \$135 (n=155). In 2002, there were 60 first time professional members.

Over the ten year period, there are five membership categories that stand out as having significant declining numbers. These are detailed in the table below.

Member category	2002	2012	Percent change
<\$24,999	45	27	-40%
\$25,000-\$34,999	62	15	-76%
\$35,000-\$44,999	157	42	-73%
\$45,000-\$54,999	185	98	-47%
>\$75,000/\$75,000-\$84,999*	155	68	-56%

*The 2002 category was >\$75,000 (155 members), the 2012 category was \$75,000-\$84,999 (68). The Society added the >\$85,000 category in 2008.

These declines are offset by gains in other categories (such as the first time professional, student, and sustaining members and those in the income categories of \$55,000-\$64,999 and \$65,000-\$74,999) resulting in a total decrease of 6.4% between 2002 and 2012.

Recommendations:

- While we need to sustain the specific membership/dues categories reported above, we should perhaps look at how we can target recruitment of new members in the \$25,000-\$34,999 (\$90 dues rate), the \$35,000-\$44,999 (\$100 dues rate), and the \$75,000-\$84,999 (\$190 dues rate) as these dues categories tended to be significantly more robust in the past ten years (56-76% decline in these categories from 2002-2012).
- Continue web based promotions and develop new ones. Based on this year's results, it appears that advertising through current members or existing networks (listserves, journal mailings, annual meetings) has been more successful than advertising with publishers online (Wiley) or with publishers' promotional efforts (UC Press). Future efforts may help refine these strategies to be more successful and build on successes already developed.
- Consider implementing a mentor or gift promotion where faculty can easily purchase gift subscriptions for their advisees or graduate students when they renew their memberships.
- Consider having special targeted web based promotions to other Sociological Societies outside the USA including, for example, European Sociological Association, British Sociological Association, International Sociological Association, etc.

- Continue and develop new strategies and promotions for reaching out to colleagues in other sociological associations with primarily U.S. based memberships. For example, Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS), Association of Black Sociologists (ABS), The National Association of Social Workers (NASW), regional sociological associations, etc.

Many thanks to the members of this committee and the SSSP Administrative Office for their excellent implementation of this year's campaign and related promotional efforts. I especially want to thank Michele Smith Koontz for her guidance and support while keeping me continually informed of new developments.

With thanks and best wishes,

Yvonne A. Braun, Chair