

**SSSP Membership and Outreach Committee Report**  
**Submitted by: Gina Petonito, Chair**  
**Annual Meeting, New York, August 2013**

**A. June Membership**

Membership numbers are increasing. According to the June 30, 2013 statistical report, total paid current membership in SSSP is currently 1622 members up about 8.9 % from this time last year (n=1498). Combining current paid members with 2012 members who have not yet renewed (n=629) membership is currently at 2251, up 6% from this time last year (when the number was 2122).

The largest category of dues paying members is, as in the past, among our student members (n=628), whose dues rate is \$30. The second largest dues category is the First Time Professional member (n=172) whose the dues rate is \$45. These two categories are followed by the \$55K to \$64,999 category (n=129) and the newly added \$100 K and up category (n=124).

Our membership is largely based in the United States. As of 06-30-13, 2012 were from the US followed by 130 from Canada. One member is from Mexico and 108 are from other foreign countries (N=2251).

The Special Problems Divisions with the largest number of members is as follows:

1. Race & Ethnic Minorities (N=286)
2. Poverty, Class and Inequality (N=277)
3. Conflict, Action & Social Change (N=227)

These were the top three divisions in 2012, but membership in each of these three divisions is declining, continuing a trend reported in the 2012 Membership and Outreach Committee Report.

<b>Divisions</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>
Race & Ethnic Minorities	286	408	667
Poverty, Class & Inequality	277	392	589
Conflict, Action & Social Change	227	317	466

This decline is no doubt due to the 2011 changes in divisional fees. Regular members have a free membership in one division and student members have a free membership in two divisions. Additional division membership is available at the cost of \$10 per division. The policy continues to generate revenue. As of June 30, 2013, 510 members paid extra division fees generating a total of \$9,150. This total is down about 13% from last year, which was \$10, 516. Although revenue declined, it is still up substantially from the \$994 gain in revenue in 2011.

**B. 2013 Sustaining Membership Report**

SSSP currently has 40 sustaining members, 29 at the \$1200 category and 11 at the \$1700 category. This represents a slight increase from last year when the number was 39 sustaining members.

### **C. 2012 Promotion Report**

In recent years, promotion campaigns have moved away from hard copy to email and web based strategies. These have proved successful. Membership campaigns are cost-effective. Total costs of all campaigns is \$1,086.80, yet total revenues generated is \$18,800 a net gain of \$17,713.20. However, there are some points to be highlighted.

- Personal contact continues to be the most effective way of recruiting new members. Recommendations by a current member or a professor during a class accounted for 43% (136) out of the 315 new members.
- Last year the committee debated where to place an online advertisement for SSSP and we chose *Contexts*. The number of new members generated from that promotion was 2. Expenditures for this campaign were \$700, yet revenue generated was \$75.
- Targeted email blasts continue to be cost-effective. For outlays of \$360 for webpage design, dues revenue generated was \$3,960. Email blasts targeting graduate students resulted in 49 members and the “recruit a New Member” campaign to 997 members minus students resulted in 63 members for a total of 112 members.
- As was the case last year, the targeted email blasts to members resulted in more members (112) than advertisement with a single entity, such as *Contexts* (2 members).
- The Membership and Outreach Committee recommended that the SSSP name have greater web based visibility. To that end, the Administrative Office, Lisa East and Michele Koontz created a SSSP Facebook and Twitter pages. At this writing the SSSP Facebook page has 754 likes and our Twitter page has 482 followers. Ryan J. Cobb, of the Membership and Outreach Committee has been building our social media presence by posting sociologically relevant articles. Our work has been guided by the information, guidelines and suggestions offered by the Technology Options Committee chaired by James Maples.

The Committee is sponsoring a New Member Breakfast on August 9, 2013 at this year’s Annual Meeting in New York. Last year’s New Member Breakfast was enjoyed by 89 people.

### **D. Comparison Membership Report June 2003 to June 2013**

Total paid current membership as of June 30, 2013 is 1622 members. We have exceeded our membership totals of 10 years ago (n=1418) by 12.5%. We are still short of our all time high membership total of 1772 recorded in June 2007, but we are moving in the right direction. A detailed comparison is as follows.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Dues</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2013</b>
Student	\$20/30	404	639	628
Unemployed	\$20/30	29	40	28
Retired	\$35/45	71	71	62
First Time	\$35/45	40	108	172
1 <sup>st</sup> Yr Employ	\$35/45	62	74	NA
<24,999	\$50/70	46	34	31
25-34,999	\$65/90	35	40	16
35-44,999	\$75/100	132	64	55
45-54,999	\$90/120	158	131	97
55-64,999	\$105/150	96	142	129
65-74,999	\$120/170	74	100	74
>75,000 75-84,999	\$135/190	168	204	76
85-99,999	210	NA	NA	63
100 +	\$250	NA	NA	124
Sustaining	\$1200/ 1700	23	29	40
Department	\$60/85	35	60	12
Life Member	0	45	36	8
Administrative	0	NA	NA	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1418</b>	<b>1772</b>	<b>1622</b>

From the above data one notes a decline in membership at the lower income levels. For example, in 2003 35 members were in the \$25-34,999 income category, while only 16 were in that category in 2013. The decline in members starts reversing with the \$55-64,999 income bracket (96 members in 2003, and 129 members in 2013). A review of the dues reveals a steeper jump in the current dues than in 2003 and 2007. Current dues step up \$25 from First Time/Year

Employee/Professional to the lowest income bracket of <24,999. In 2003 dues stepped up \$15 from First Time/Year Employee/Professional to the lowest income bracket of <24,999.

Members at the highest income bracket continue to support the society. In 2003, there were 168 members in the \$75,000 + bracket and in 2013, there were 263 members in the income brackets above \$75,000. Sustaining members have also increased--23 members in 2003, up to 40 members in 2013.

The data also suggest that we are doing a better job at recruiting first time professionals. In 2003, 102 members were first time employees/professionals, while in 2013 172 reported being first time professionals. However, we are 10 members below the numbers from 2007, which were 182. Similarly, 2013 has 174 more student members than 2003. However, we are down 11 student members from 2007.

Finally, Department members reached highs in 2006 (see below) with 74 memberships. Currently, we have 12 memberships. These numbers are consistent with the past five years where department memberships have remained in the low teens.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>Department Members</b>	74	60	22	15	11	11	13	12

### **Recommendations**

- We continue to encourage individual recruitment of potential members to SSSP, as these are the most effective methods to date. Last year, the Membership and Outreach Committee Chair recommended that we have a way for faculty or chairs to purchase gift memberships for students. We can revisit this recommendation.
- Continue to monitor additional divisional membership revenue to see if this year's decline continues or stabilizes at current levels.
- Continue web-based promotions, especially those that target students and existing members.
- Continue building the Society's presence in social media and generating web traffic on the Facebook and Twitter sites. Consider adding these sites on the membership form to track how many people joined the Society as a result of them.
- Consider moving the online ad from *Contexts* to another venue to determine the best site in which to advertise.
- Develop ways of tracking retention of members who participate in the new member breakfast. Perhaps we can pass around a sign up sheet and see if these attendees continue to rejoin the organization.

- Revisit the dues structure at the lower income levels. Perhaps, we should consider a more gradual increase of dues at these lower income levels. One possibility is to collapse the lower categories: <34,999 income category at \$70 and 35-54,999 at \$100. Other ways of addressing this issue are also possible.
- Closely related to the above is the reality of contingent faculty in the professoriate. According to AAUP reports 40% of all faculty are part time as of 1998 (<http://www.aaup.org/report/contingent-appointments-and-academic-profession>). Perhaps SSSP should institute a part time faculty membership dues category, along with raising the lowest income membership category to <34,999.
- Consider ways of increasing the number of department memberships. Kendra Jason is currently exploring which departments are most active in SSSP for the purposes of instituting departmental awards. This effort may be a point upon which to start.

I extend sincere thanks to the members of this committee and the Administrative Office. I especially want to thank to Lisa East for her work on developing our social media presence. And, very special thanks to Michele Koontz for her continual assistance and support throughout the year. My job as chair of this committee was made substantially easier by her timely communication and cheerful assistance.

My best wishes for continual success in membership and outreach in the coming years.

Gina Petonito, Chair