

# SSSP Graduate Student Meeting

August 15, 2014

8:30am - Foothill F

Submitted by Graduate Student Representatives to the Board of Directors, Margaret Austin Smith and Kathryn Nowotny and Sarah Hendricks (outgoing).

**Welcome and Introductions.** 20 students were in attendance (compared to 8 in 2013).

## **Approval of Agenda.**

**Experiences with SSSP** -- Janelle Pham shared her experience working on committee for underfunded sociologists to attend the annual meeting. Grad student board members recommend graduate students attending division business meetings.

## **Feedback from Graduate Students:**

1. We discussed the **mentorship program** and graduate students' experiences with it. Three students present requested mentors. Two were unable to find mutual times with mentors. One has had productive email conversation with her mentor and will meet mentor tomorrow.

A student actively involved in North American Society for Sociology of Sport offered that that society has a time blocked on the program for mentor meetings. If you sign on to participate in mentoring program, there is a specific session on the program that you are committing to attend.

Students expressed interest in non-academic mentorship as well. Could the local organization that SSSP honors with the Social Action award have a representative to meet with graduate students?

Some interest in the speed-dating model of mentorship -- a good way to get to know a number of people that you might connect with later. Also, such a session would have clear timeframe so that mentors and mentees know exactly what they are signing on for.

2. Graduate student response to proposed change in by-laws that Graduate Student Rep to Board of Directors would have to step down. Students wanted to know reasoning for this proposed change and favored continuity over graduate student status. Comments include: "We want someone who knows what's going on" and "I don't see why you wouldn't want that expertise" (in reference to knowledge of SSSP and knowledge of post-grad transitions) and "If you just graduated, you don't forget what it's like to be a grad student."

3. Graduate students expressed interest in more mentorship on alternative academic careers. Could the Society provide more insight into ways of using graduate training for advocacy, non-profit work, research, and so on? Could there be workshops or panels on alternatives to academia? Next year's graduate student workshop (to take place within the

grad student meeting or in its own separate session if program committee allows space) will target alternative academic professional opportunities.

## **9am - Dr. Kathleen Lowney, Editor Teaching Sociology - A Primer on Peer Review and Publication**

### **First Annual Graduate Student Workshop**

Dr. Lowney shared with graduate students what she has learned in 5 years of editing Teaching Sociology, including the value of telling a story, importance of following submission and style guidelines, providing a strong abstract that matches the paper, and the courtesy of making revisions for an R and R in a different color font. An R and R letter to the editor should highlight what you have changed and why.

Dr. Lowney shared that at her institution, there is a writing group where everyone brings a letter from an editor that asks the author to revise and resubmit, and the writing group works together to answer "How do you write back to this editor?"

Could there be such a workshop at SSSP next year? Dr. Lowney has offered to participate in such a session.

The workshop received very favorable responses. All in attendance agreed it was very helpful, Dr. Lowney was excellent, and that such workshops should continue at future annual meetings.