

Date: August 20, 2015

To: Michele Koontz, Administrative Officer

From: Shannon Monnat, Chairperson of the Council of Divisions

Re: Council of Division Chairperson Report

1. Appreciation and thanks

As my term ends at this annual meeting, I would like to express my thanks to Michele Koontz, Hector Delgado, Douglas Oeser, and everyone else at the Admin Office for their assistance and support throughout this year and throughout the past three years. This has been a wonderful learning experience for me, and I have appreciated the opportunity to meet so many wonderful people, become involved with SSSP, and gain insight into everything that goes into keeping a professional organization strong and all the time, energy, and organization it takes to plan an annual meeting. Thank you, all!

2. Division Fulfillment of Responsibilities (2014-2015)

a. Representation at Division Meetings

All divisions had representation at both division meetings.

b. Budget Submission

All divisions submitted budgets.

c. Newsletter Dissemination

All divisions submitted at least one newsletter. Three divisions (Environment & Technology; Sexual Behavior, Politics and Community; Social Problems Theory) distributed three newsletters.

There is wide variation in the length and quality of newsletters. Some newsletters are simple text word documents, while others are elaborate professional looking documents with pictures and color. Particularly impressive newsletters are coming out of the Community Research and Development, Global, Institutional Ethnography, and Racial and Ethnic Minorities divisions.

d. Nominations for Division Chairpersons

Over the last three years, the same two divisions have had challenges soliciting nominees for the division chairperson election (Families; Sport, Leisure and Body). Law and Society also had difficulty this year. After a division chair informs me that they cannot identify at least two nominees, I send an 'Urgent' email to members of those divisions, stressing that the division could be at risk of elimination if at least two nominees are not identified. This has always resulted in at least two nominees (sometimes more). Division chairs articulated two separate challenges for recruiting nominees.

i. Expense to Division Chairs for Attending Annual Meeting

Agreeing to be a division chair is effectively a three-year annual meeting commitment. Division chairs reported that when they contacted members to recruit them to run for division chair, many members declined because they could not afford to attend three annual meetings. Division chairs are required to attend at least four meetings (three council meetings and the business meeting). These meetings span over three days, requiring a 2-night hotel stay (at a minimum). As department travel funding continues to be cut, especially at smaller and less-resourced colleges and universities, we run the risk of attracting only those scholars who are located at the most affluent universities (private colleges/universities and R1s). This may result in a reduction in the diversity of division chairs.

ACTION ITEM: We propose that the BFA consider allocating a stipend to division chairs to attend the annual meeting in future budgets.

ii. Bylaws Restriction that Members Can Serve in One Elected Position

Division chairpersons report that many people who would make excellent division chairs are already serving in an elected position. Members of the Council of Divisions appreciate the spirit (or at least what they perceive to be the spirit) – to include as many different voices in leadership roles as possible. Nevertheless, they propose the following action:

ACTION ITEM: Revise the bylaws to create an exception to the one elected position policy for those currently serving in the division chairperson role and for those wanting to volunteer to be nominated for the chairperson role in the same year in which they are serving in the other elected position.

3. Social Networking Presence

Ten divisions have a Facebook presence (up from six in 2013-2014), and five have twitter accounts. Social media can be a good way to disseminate information to division members, post articles of interest, and engage participation, but they are not being used to their full potential. In fact, many of the Facebook and twitter accounts are defunct. Only the Racial and Ethnic Minorities page is updated regularly. The REM Facebook presence is quite impressive. They have amassed 395 members to their page (up from 221 last year). The REM chairpersons and the newsletter editor, Kasey Hendricks, should be commended for the social media presence.

4. Declines in Division Memberships

Division membership tallies for 2011-2015 are presented in Table 1. Fifteen out of the 22 divisions are currently under the 150-membership floor stated in the bylaws, and division membership has been declining precipitously for the past three years for most divisions. The 150-member requirement is not congruent with the 50-person requirement for forming a division. The 150-member requirement appears to exist only because SSSP wants there to be enough members in a division to justify the number of annual meeting sessions that are allocated to divisions (3 sole-authored and 7 co-sponsored). Some small divisions are quite active, whereas some larger divisions are inactive most of the year. Given that a division has never actually been eliminated, the 150-member requirement seems outdated and unnecessary.

Table 1. Division Membership Numbers

Division	2011**	2012	2013	2014	2015	% Change 2014-2015	% Change 2012-2015
Racial & Ethnic Minorities	428	291	305	330	352	6.7	21.0
Disabilities	72	61	70	59	73	23.7	19.7
Educational Problems	157	114	120	119	133	11.8	16.7
Sociology & Social Welfare	184	100	95	105	111	5.7	11.0
Global	230	138	138	143	149	4.2	8.0
Conflict, Social Action, & Change	344	214	237	215	218	1.4	1.9
Labor Studies	153	114	122	107	113	5.6	-0.9
Environment & Technology	127	103	115	101	102	1.0	-1.0
Crime & Juvenile Delinquency	273	183	206	214	179	-16.4	-2.2
Health, Health Policy, & Health Services	281	204	221	181	196	8.3	-3.9
Community Research & Development	257	171	174	158	163	3.2	-4.7
Society and Mental Health	164	118	128	113	110	-2.7	-6.8
Sport, Leisure & the Body	82	49	51	46	45	-2.2	-8.2
Poverty, Class, & Inequality	507	313	290	327	287	-12.2	-8.3
Family	188	129	110	107	118	10.3	-8.5
Drinking & Drugs	138	99	107	111	87	-21.6	-12.1
Sexual Behavior, Politics, & Communities	250	204	194	179	177	-1.1	-13.2
Youth, Aging, & the Life Course	159	96	82	82	81	-1.2	-15.6
Law & Society	214	155	147	142	129	-9.2	-16.8
Institutional Ethnography	189	134	138	113	104	-8.0	-22.4
Teaching Social Problems	267	150	139	125	116	-7.2	-22.7
Social Problems Theory	308	192	165	148	138	-6.8	-28.1

**Prior to 2012: Each member received three FREE division memberships. Additional divisions were \$2 each
Sorted in order of membership change

ACTION ITEM: We propose a revision to Section III.A.3 of the bylaws from:

The Council of the Divisions may recommend to the Executive Officer that a division be discontinued, if the division fails to comply with one or more of the following requirements: (1) have at least 150 members for two years running, (2) have a replacement chair elected by the end of the current chair's term of office, (3) organize at least two sessions for the Annual Meeting, (4) be represented at every meeting of the Council of Divisions, and (5) hold a divisional meeting at the Annual Meeting. The Executive Officer will discuss the recommendation with the Council and invite the division in question to respond to the Council's recommendation. The Council and Executive Officer will then decide whether to forward their recommendation to the Board for the final decision.

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5. New Chairperson of Council of Divisions elected by division chairpersons on Friday, Aug 20.

Bhoomi Thakore was elected and graciously agreed to serve as the Chairperson of the Council of Divisions, 2015-2018.

The Chairperson of the Council of Divisions is responsible for attending and participating in several meetings (three Board meetings, Awards Ceremony) and moderating several meetings at the annual meeting (three council meetings, Nominations Committee Meeting). There is a steep learning curve for what is expected in each of these meetings. One way of easing the new Chairperson into this role and helping to prepare them for their first year as Chairperson of the Council of Divisions would be to create a 'Chairperson-Elect' of the Council of Divisions. Instead of waiting until the final year of the existing Chairperson's term, the next Chairperson would be elected the year *before* the existing Chairperson's term ends. The Chairperson-Elect of the Council would attend all of the same meetings as the Chairperson of the Council the year before that person

becomes the Chairperson of the Council. The Chairperson-Elect would not be a member of the Board of Directors. This person would attend as a learning observer.

ACTION ITEM 1: Change the Operations Manual to create the position of Chairperson-Elect of the Council of Divisions that would be elected into that role the year before the current Chairperson's final year of service. This person would not be a member of the Board of Directors and would not have a vote.

ACTION ITEM 2: SSSP will cover the cost of 3-nights of hotel room stay for the Chairperson-Elect.

ACTION ITEM 3: Change the Operations Manual to indicate that the Chairperson-Elect is appointed as a Member of the Nominations Committee in the year that person is elected as Chairperson-Elect.

6. Award Ceremony/Reception

- The Division Chairpersons are pleased with the move from a banquet to a short ceremony and reception.
- However, there is much concern that many members will not attend because of ASA receptions scheduled at the same time (Saturday 6:30 PM). One division currently co-sponsors its reception with an ASA Section, and that reception is occurring on Saturday at the same time as the SSSP Award Ceremony. This division will present its awards at the co-sponsored ASA Section reception instead of at the SSSP Award Ceremony/Reception (though the student paper award winner will still be announced at the SSSP ceremony). Although SSSP should encourage collaboration and networking with ASA, SSSP is effectively paying for some division members to go to a reception off site at the same time as our Award Ceremony (via the allocated division budget).
- Moreover, many SSSP Division members are members of other ASA Sections that are holding their receptions on Saturday evening, 6:30-8:30 (I counted 17 ASA Section Receptions being held Sat 6:30-8:30 PM). In addition, the ASA Student Reception is being held at the same time as our Award Ceremony/Reception.
- A Friday ceremony would decrease scheduling conflicts with ASA. ASA has not traditionally scheduled Section receptions on Friday.
- The Award Ceremony/Reception could serve the same purpose as the Opening Reception (currently held on Friday). That is, these two receptions could be held simultaneously as the 'Opening Reception and Award Ceremony'. This could be a way to encourage new members (especially graduate students) to join divisions. This would also help with the meeting space concern posed by the 2015 Program Committee.

ACTION ITEM: We propose that, as part of the Annual Meeting scheduling shell, the Awards Ceremony/Reception be scheduled for Friday evening instead of Saturday evening.

7. Proposed Changes to How Annual Meeting Sessions are Allocated

After the POSPC meeting Friday morning, I presented a summary of the POSPC discussion of alternative ways to allocate annual meeting sessions, as recommended by the POSPC members.

Division chairs were strongly opposed to an ASA-style model (a set number of sessions allocated based on division membership). They noted an appreciation of SSSP's dedication to all divisions, no matter the size. They were generally in favor of a model that allocates sessions proportionate to the number of papers submitted on specified topics. However, there were some concerns and considerations:

- Whatever model we use should not restrict creative ways to set up sessions (i.e., How would this model allow for non-paper presentation type sessions?)
- Some chairpersons recommend research/area topics instead of divisions as the way of organizing paper submissions because some divisions will have more difficulty developing coherent sessions (Institutional Ethnography, Teaching Social Problems) if papers are submitted to divisions instead of topics.
 - There was a concern that SSSP members (especially new members) do not know what divisions we have (despite the fact that there is a link to Divisions on the SSSP website). Division chairpersons recommend that whatever model is used, the paper submission module should include the division names and relevant associated keywords.
- Any model should be sure to allow for division co-sponsorship of sessions.
- Any model should enable the use of multiple organizers if desired by the division. Many division chairpersons view this as a way to keep members involved and recruit future division chairpersons.
- Chairpersons were in favor of a minimum and maximum number of sessions for divisions.

The chairpersons mostly rallied around the idea of a hybrid model with a minimum number of sessions allocated to each division (e.g., 2) with the rest of the sessions allocated based on paper submissions. The division chairpersons recommend that the POSPC find other models for session organizing and assess the feasibility/desirability of those models within the context of SSSP's mission. This action was proposed at the Friday PM board meeting and carried.