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Annual Report to the Budget, Finance and Audit Committee of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, 2015

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The Department of Sociology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK) and the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) continue to enjoy a long and productive relationship. We have been the home of the Executive Office since 1990, and remain the home of the Administrative Office. Most, if not all, of our faculty and graduate students are members of SSSP, attend the annual conference, and avidly read *Social Problems*. Several faculty members have served on a variety of SSSP committee positions over the years. As both a long-standing member of the SSSP, and as department head, the relationship is one that I support without reservation.

My work with the Administrative Office staff (Michele Koontz, Sharon Shumaker, Marisa Stone, and Doug Oeser) and the Executive Officer (Héctor L. Delgado) continues to be both positive and productive. They do an excellent job and they operate in a very professional manner. Our senior departmental administrative assistant, Nancy Loftis works closely with Michele on budgetary matters in the Department. Michele has a very good working relationship with both Nancy Loftis and our other administrative assistant, Shirley Martin. We are pleased that SSSP continues to employ one of our graduate students (Doug Oeser) as its GRA.

An issue that will require resolution soon is the increasing costs the Department is paying to house SSSP. Several contracts ago, SSSP generously agreed to include money in the budget that was to be used for additional departmental compensation. Since 2006, the University of Tennessee has failed to pay the SSSP GRA tuition, despite its contractual commitment to do so. Since that time, the department has been forced to pay for the GRA's tuition. At this point, with increases in tuition and even with the Society's decision to add a small amount of money to our current fiscal year expenses, all monies provided by the Society are now devoted to paying the GRA's tuition. To be clear, the money that SSSP intended the Department to use for programmatic purposes is fully being devoted to the SSSP GRA.

This situation will be unsustainable soon. We value our relationship with SSSP greatly, but our departmental operating budget has been stagnant for decades. We not only cannot be in a position to subsidize the GRA, we would like to return to the provision under previous contracts during which SSSP provided some additional funding for the department. I am certainly willing to push the University of Tennessee administration to return to its previous aid with the GRA tuition and fees, but I do not feel confident of a positive outcome. The University of Tennessee, like so many of our peer institutions, continues to suffer from declining or stagnant budgets.

I am, of course, more than happy to talk with the Budget, Finance and Audit Committee regarding this issue, over conference call or in person. I continue to have an excellent working relationship with the Administrative Office staff and the Executive Officer, and fully expect that will continue. The Department continues to benefit greatly from hosting the Administrative Office, but some mutually agreeable solution will have to be reached regarding the GTA tuition and fees, and additional compensation for the Department. I look forward to this longstanding and very positive relationship continuing, and working with the Executive Officer and the Administrative Office this next year.