

2020 APPROVED RESOLUTIONS
THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Compiled by Daina Cheyenne Harvey, SSSP Vice-President and Chair, Committee on Social Action

1. “Expression of Gratitude”

Submitted by: SSSP Administrative Office

2. “Resolution to Support Improved Conditions for Contingent/Adjunct or Non-Tenure Track Faculty”

Submitted by: Keith Johnson and Gillian Niebrugge-Brantley

RESOLUTION 1: Expression of Gratitude

Submitted by: SSSP Administrative Office

While the 2020 SSSP Annual Meeting in San Francisco was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we still need to express our sincere appreciation to all of the officers, committee chairs, and members whose efforts help maintain the vitality of the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP). First, we thank President Heather M. Dalmage for her superb leadership in developing the 70th Annual Meeting and its theme: *Bringing the Hope Back In: Sociological Imagination and Dreaming Transformation* and also in navigating uncharted water to move the Society forward during the COVID-19 crisis. We also thank this year’s Program Committee members Angie K. Beeman and Doug Meyer and especially the Program Committee Co-Chairs, Tsedale M. Melaku and Barbara Katz Rothman, for putting together an outstanding program that was unfortunately unable to come to fruition the way it had been envisioned; and the Local Arrangements Committee Chair, Valerie Francisco-Menchavez, and her committee, Orly Clerge and Theresa Ysabel Rocha Beardall. We thank the Park Central Hotel for working with us up to our cancellation, and we particularly want to recognize the efforts made by Emily Cogswell, Senior Convention Services Manager and Troy Smith, Director of Group Sales.

The Society wishes to express its gratitude to Past President Nancy J. Mezey for her years of leadership; Vice-President Daina Cheyenne Harvey for managing the resolutions process; Glenn W. Muschert for his service as Secretary; and Susan M. Carlson for her service as Treasurer.

The Society also thanks Corey Dolgon, President-Elect; Pamela Anne Quiroz, Vice-President-Elect; Board of Directors: Yvonne A. Braun, Matthew W. Hughey, Debbie A. Potter, Giovanna Follo, Bhoomi K. Thakore, outgoing members Maralee Mayberry, Fernando I. Rivera, student representatives of the Board Apoorva Ghosh (outgoing) and Melissa R. Maxey, Kristen M. Budd, Chairperson of the Council of the Divisions; Annulla Linders and Earl Wright II, Co-Editors of *Social Problems*; Heather Dillaway, outgoing Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee Chair and committee members Susan M. Carlson, Louis Edgar Esparza, and David J. Luke; Shirley A.

Jackson, Editorial and Publications Committee Chair and committee members Loretta E. Bass (outgoing), Valerie Leiter (outgoing), David G. Embrick, Rogelio Saenz, A. Javier Treviño, Heather Dillaway(outgoing), Pamela Anne Quiroz, Annulla Linders, and Earl Wright II; and the University of Tennessee and the Department of Sociology for hosting the SSSP Administrative Office. A special thanks to the Mansfield Institute for Social Justice at Roosevelt University for their financial contribution to program activities and Oxford University Press for its financial contribution to the 2020 ½-day Virtual Annual Meeting.

The Society wishes to thank Executive Officer Héctor L. Delgado, Administrative Officer & Meeting Manager Michele Smith Koontz, Assistant to the Administrative Officer Kelsey Whitaker, Information Technology Specialist Rachel Cogburn, Graduate Research Associate & Webmaster Zaina Shams and the leaders of the 23 Divisions for continuing to make the Society run and be successful in fulfilling its mission year in and year out.

RESOLUTION 2: Resolution to Support Improved Conditions for Contingent/Adjunct or Non-Tenure Track Faculty

Submitted by: Keith Johnson and Gillian Niebrugge-Brantley

1. **Whereas**, there has been a shift in higher education over the last half-century so that “tenure system faculty are now a privileged minority” (Report of the ASA Task Force 2019: 6—hereafter Task Force) and over 50% of instructors in public and private institutions of higher education are now “contingent” or “adjunct” faculty (GAO 2017: 15, n32)—a condition so pervasive that one organization representing these instructors is titled “The New Faculty Majority.” This shift has been accompanied and achieved by a policy of deliberately ignoring the crucial role and plight of non-tenure track faculty in higher education today. One example of this is the confusing range of titles for these faculty, that are frequently employed in contradictory ways among institutions.

2. **Whereas**, what we do know about the treatment of these faculty is that it is not good: it is detrimental to the state of higher education and the workers who labor as non-tenure track faculty. Non-tenure track faculty workers are typically employed under the following conditions, all of which create a condition of precarity:

- a. low salaries— “Overall, part-time faculty respondents report low compensation rates across all institutional categories. Toutkoushian and Bellas (2003) found that part-time faculty earn approximately 60% less than comparable full-time faculty in institutional salary when expressed on an hourly basis.” (Task Force 2019: 14)
- b. absence of benefits— “Benefits are a particular problem for part-time faculty. The CAW survey (2012) found that only 22% of contingent faculty respondents had access to health insurance coverage through their academic employer. The American Federation of Teachers offered similar findings in a 2010 survey, which found that 28% of part-time faculty had health coverage through their academic employment. “Health insurance

benefits appear to be linked with course load,” the latter survey found. “Just 11 percent of those who teach only one course receive employer health benefits, while 26 percent of those who teach two courses and 39 percent who teach three courses or more receive benefits.” (AFT 2010: 14) (Task Force 2019: 14)

- c. job security is minimal, contracts are typically issued only around the start of a term, if at all; renewal is typically not guaranteed; (Task Force 2019: 15)
- d. non-tenure track faculty are typically excluded from participation in governance at the institution and from professional development opportunities; (Task Force 2019: 21)
- e. office space ranges from shared to non-existent; (Task Force 2019: 21)
- f. computers and copying facilities are typically sub-standard and restricted. (Task Force 2019: 21)

3. **Whereas**, this combination of conditions is detrimental to the educational experience, leading to:

- a. lack of time to prepare syllabi and all the problems attendant on that first difficulty; (Task Force 2019: 18)
- b. being forced to order texts at the last moment; (Task Force 2019: 19)
- c. working without adequate access to computer, copying, and library facilities; (Task Force 2019: 18)
- d. working without orientation to governing policies for student conduct; (Task Force 2019: 19)
- e. working around a substandard office situation (frequently having to meet students in coffee shops or one’s car); (Task Force 2019: 20-21)
- f. having to teach at more than one institution in order to earn a living wage; (Task Force 2019: 18, 21)
- g. going unrewarded, unaided, and unrecognized for one’s own scholarly achievements. (Task Force 2019: 21-22)

4. **Whereas**, because this condition of precarity, maintained by low salaries and lack of job security, gives administrators more flexibility in terms of costs and scheduling, administrators have little interest in improving the situation for non-tenure track faculty, which frequently function as part of the institution’s financial margin.

5. **Therefore, be it resolved** that SSSP request *US News and World Report*, in its widely used rankings and assessment of colleges and universities in the United States, to include as a criterion how well institutions provide for non-tenure track faculty. The following criteria should be included as components of the final evaluation:

- a. qualifications of the non-tenure track faculty as compared with tenure-system faculty at the institution;
- b. salaries as compared with tenure-system faculty at the institution;
- c. benefits as compared with tenure-system faculty at the institution;
- d. inclusion in governance as compared with tenure-system faculty at the institution;

- e. office space and access to technology and library resources as compared with tenure-system faculty at the institution;
- f. professional development opportunities as compared with tenure-system faculty at the institution;
- g. job security as compared with tenure-system faculty at the institution.

Members of SSSP would be happy to be available to editors to help in the production of this new criteria.