

**To:** SSSP Board Members  
**From:** Sarah Jane Brubaker, Chair  
**Date:** July 15, 2020

## **Report from the Anti-Harassment Committee**

The anti-harassment committee, originally appointed by Hector Delgado, Executive Officer, on May 26, 2018, met twice virtually this past year - on November 21 and April 20.

The first meeting was convened to discuss the possibility of hosting a post-conference workshop at the 2020 meeting in San Francisco focused on preventing harassment in academia. After much research into potential facilitators and formats, we concluded that the costs were beyond the capacity of the committee and the unpredictability of attendance to cover costs was prohibitive. The committee hopes to continue to explore ways of providing more training, education and awareness to SSSP meetings.

The second meeting was to discuss amendments to the policy and procedures regarding anti-harassment in response to the committee's review of a report of harassment. The committee proposed two revisions to the policy, both of which were approved by the board. The revisions generally distinguish between harassment occurring at SSSP events versus those occurring outside such events, and the related responsibility of the committee and society. Details are provided here:

### **1<sup>st</sup> Proposed Revision:**

**Approved: 11 votes**

**Did not approve: 0 votes**

**Did not vote: 5 board members**

**Abstained: 1 board member**

### **Reporting**

Reports of policy violations, including retaliation, can be made via email at [SSSPAHC@utk.edu](mailto:SSSPAHC@utk.edu) or phone to the Anti-Harassment Committee Chair or EO.

Individuals who have experienced a violation of the anti-harassment policy have the following options:

1. Request a confidential consultation with the Anti-Harassment Committee Chair/Ombudsperson with a request for resources, information about reporting/resolution options, and other types of support. Such a request can be made whether the alleged harassment took place during a SSSP meeting or not. The ombudsperson can help the individual decide what to do and how to do it, including, for example, helping them file a complaint at their home

institution, where the harassment occurred, if that is the action they want to take after discussing their options with the ombudsperson.

2. Make a confidential report to the Anti-Harassment Committee Chair/Ombudsperson with a request for screening/review and recommendation for resolution [e.g. through a mediated meeting with parties, where the EO or committee chair reaches out to the accused party] with the option, but without obligation, to file a formal report.
3. Make a formal confidential report to an External Consultant with a request for an investigation/fact-finding with possible sanctioning of the accused party. This option will move the report to a formal investigation.

### **2nd Proposed Revision:**

**Approved: 12 votes**

**Did not approve: 0 votes**

**Did not vote: 5 board members**

**Abstained: 0 votes**

### **Investigation/Fact-Finding**

The investigation process will apply to reports of harassment that takes place during the annual meeting, the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee Mid-Year meeting, and online committee and Board meetings/discussions. Reports may also include cases where an institution or legal authorities have investigated and found that a member has engaged in sexual or other form of harassment and the SSSP is being asked to act in response to those findings.

Reports that move to this stage regarding harassment that takes place at SSSP events will be investigated by an External Consultant with professional experience and expertise in handling harassment cases. The accused party will be notified of the charges and given an opportunity to respond. Each party's statement will be shared with the other. Both parties may provide contact information for individuals to serve as witnesses/references.

Reports that relate to incidents that have taken place outside of SSSP events, including those that have been investigated externally, will be reviewed by the Anti-Harassment committee and considered for specific action. The committee may consult with its own investigator, legal consultant, or others in making its decision.

\*\*\*\*\*

This year, the composition of the committee was changed through the general election, with two members originally appointed, David G. Embrick and Elroi Windsor, rotating off, replaced by two newly-elected members, Kristen Budd and Hephzibah V. Strmic-Pawl.

Also, Wendy Simonds and I have participated in conversations with some of the leaders of ASA, SWS, PSA, and SSS, who were interested in our policy and procedures related

to anti-harassment because they are developing their own and hoped to learn from our processes.

I would like to thank Hector and the Board for establishing the committee, and to thank all the members of the committee for their diligent and thoughtful work on this important topic, which we all view as critical to the mission of SSSP.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'S. Brubaker', written in black ink.

Sarah Jane Brubaker, Chair, (on behalf of Adriana Bohm, David Embrick, Claire Renzetti, Wendy Simonds, and Elroi Windsor)