

2019-2020
Society for the Study of Social Problems
Virtual Meeting
July 15, 2020

Chair: John D. Foster, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Members: Alexander L. Dzurick, Student Representative (2017-2020); Nathalie Rita, Student Representative (2018-2021); Christina D. Weber (2017-2020); Barbara Wejnert (2018-2021); Cameron T. Whitley (2018-2021); Janelle M. Pham (2019-2022); Stephani Williams (2019-2022); Carley Geiss, Student Representative (2019-2022)

SSSP Divisions (the top five) with the largest number of current members (2020) as of May 31, 2020 are:

Racial and Ethnic Minorities (296)
Poverty, Class, and Inequality (176)
Conflict, Social Action/Change (156)
Health, Health Policy, & Health Services (128)
Gender (118)

The top three were also the largest divisions at the end of 2019. Health, Health Policy, & Health Services replaced Crime and Juvenile Delinquency in the 4th spot, while Gender moved ahead of Juvenile Delinquency for the 5th spot. It should be stressed that ALL divisions saw declines, with some experiencing steep declines (e.g., Crime and Juvenile Delinquency experienced a 37 percent drop).

Promotional Efforts, as of June 30th, 2020:

This past year we continued our efforts to connect with people through digital means. In December we approved a new promotional page, which was sent to Graduate Studies Directors, as well as both student and non-student members. We updated our Testimonials page on the SSSP website and the chair identified abstracts from the 2019 meeting to display on the Featured Abstracts page. In an effort to boost our online presence, committee members contributed monthly media blasts that were posted on Facebook and Twitter. Topics varied in substance, including one blast informing members of their option to gift a membership. As of July 8th of this year, the SSSP Facebook page had 4,494 followers and 4,418 “likes.”

We had no brochure fees because there were no additional brochures printed. In all, 428 brochures were mailed out, costing \$106.15 in postage. These brochures attracted two new members, generating \$83.00 in dues revenue (-\$23.15 after subtracting postage fees).

In an effort to encourage past members to renew their memberships, the chair drafted a “We Want You Back” letter that was sent out to members on June 15th who did not renew in 2018 or 2019. The message was sent out to 1,453 lapsed members, 587 from 2018, and 866 from 2019. This letter was sent out with two similar letters in June, and resulted in 52 renewals.

Our graduate student promotions continued: this year, from January 10th to March 31st, 207 page-views (via Google) yielded 48 new members, generating \$1,584 in dues revenue (\$1,436.50 after subtracting

promotional webpage design fees). Meanwhile, as of June 30th 26 gift memberships had been purchased for graduate students, totaling \$858 in dues revenue.

The “Call to Action: Time to Renew and Recruit” email blast was sent to 2019+ members, yielded 58 new members for a revenue of \$2,700 (\$2,552 after subtracting promotional webpage design fees).

Total promotional expenses (postage fees and promotional webpage design fees) for the year amounted to \$401.15. The number of members who joined based upon our promotional efforts, including target email blasts, was 209, generating a total of \$9,631 in dues, generating \$9,229.85 in promotional revenue.

Recommendations:

The attempt to maintain and grow our membership during a global pandemic is now our challenge. Doubling our efforts to increase the Society’s exposure on social media will help us to take on this challenge. Committee members will contribute at least two media blasts to post on SSSP media platforms during the 2020-2021 promotional campaign. While the Testimonials webpage has been updated, we will continue to work on recruiting non-academic professionals to submit testimonials for the page. We will reach out to divisional heads to consider gifting memberships in order to increase their numbers, and we recommend that the gifting process be evaluated to see if it can be more inclusive. We will also have another “we want you back” letter sent out in the fall in order to help bring back past members.

I would like to thank Alex Dzurick and Christina Weber who will be concluding their term on the committee and welcome Amaka Camille Okechukwu, Cynthia Baiqing Zhang, and Martin Jacinto (student representative) onto the committee for the 2020-2023 term. Finally, I want to thank Michele Koontz, Rachel Cogburn, and the SSSP leadership for their guidance and support during these tumultuous times.

Respectfully submitted,

John D. Foster
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