

2021 SSSP Graduate Student Member Meeting Report

2 August 2021, 2pm CDT

Melissa Maxey (Outgoing Representative)

Lydia Hou (Current Representative)

Shaontá Allen (Incoming Representative)

Six student members attended the 2021 SSSP Graduate Student Member meeting. An overview of the importance of the meeting was given, attendees were given an opportunity to introduce themselves and talk about their relationship to SSSP as graduate student members.

An overview was given of the various opportunities SSSP offer to graduate students, including information on the mentorship program, scholarships, awards, division meetings, business meetings, and conference events.

The meeting focused largely on graduate student feedback on the following questions:

- a. How else can SSSP support graduate student professionalization both within and outside of academia?
- b. What would you like to see next year?
- c. What would help increase student membership?

This conversation focused heavily on increasing opportunities for SSSP grad student members to meet each other and form regular communication. Some of the suggestions provided were to have a platform for regular communication and to have regular grad student events throughout the year. Opportunities for grad student member to support each other was another theme, such as having accountability groups and/or creative chat sessions – spaces for SSSP grad student members to come together and share ideas that might not be possible in their usual academic homes. Having this kind of regular communication and meeting was discussed as a way for current members to be more excited about SSSP support and therefore more “word of mouth” sharing with others about what it means to be a SSSP grad student member – therefore, possibly increasing future membership and retaining current grad student members. A student survey was also suggested. For next year’s meetings, several suggestions for events were given including forming a diverse panel of folks who have been members and actively involved with SSSP throughout their careers as a way to build on the mentorship program that already exists. There was also significant support for having a session for grad student members to meet with a plenary speaker and/or President following a Presidential address as an opportunity for professional networking. Addition ideas included holding training opportunities for students for professional development, speed mentoring events, and a reception/happy hour/food event.