

To : Members of the Board
Society for the Study of Social Problems
From : Junior Hopwood *JR Hopwood*
Chair
Date : July 18, 2022
Re : Annual Accessibility Committee Report

The Accessibility Committee met virtually in March of 2022. The committee members included the following:

- Junior Hopwood, Chair (2021 – 2022)
- Marlese Durr, Chair-elect (2022 – 2023)
- B. Ethan M. Coston (2021 – 2022)
- Alan Santinele Martino (2021 – 2022)

The purpose of the meeting was to review and update the accessibility statement for the 2022 annual conference in Los Angeles. In terms of reviewing the accessibility statement, the committee ratified the statement of previous years. However, the nature of the requests for accommodations during the preliminary registration stage reflected the continued diversity of the SSSP family but also a need to review the existing policy.

Five (5) attendees to the conference made requests for accommodations. These requests included the following:

- wheelchair access to the presentation rooms or remote access, if COVID-19 rates remain high in the Los Angeles area
- printed program agenda
- virtual presentation
- recordings or transcripts of the sessions (for individual with ADHD)
- the availability of a tall chair for the presenter at the presentation podium

The Committee, with the invaluable assistance of Michele Smith Koontz and Héctor Delgado, was able to resolve four of the five requests. The outstanding request is related to access to recordings or transcripts of the sessions. Héctor and Michele shared with the committee the reality that some of the presenters from last year's conference were either reluctant or indicated their disagreement to having their presentation recorded. Not wanting to refuse or summarily deny this request, the chair of the Accessibility Committee, again in discussion with Michele and Héctor, have reached out to the individual to a) asked the attendee to provide a list of the sessions that she intends to attend, b) inform the individual that from the list, the chair of the committee will reach out to the session coordinators and presenters to see if they would be in agreement to having the sessions recorded or will to provide a transcript to the individual, c) inform the attendee that acceding to such a request is at the discretion of the presenter. At the time of preparing this report the attendee has not responded to the emailed sent.

This request has brought to the fore the demand to facilitate the needs of attendees with challenges and the presenters' concerns for protecting the authorship of their work. A suggestion presented by committee member Ethan, is for presenters to print large-formatted copies of the slides even if it means sacrificing the visual graphics. This would be an "incredible neurodivergent accessibility aid" for individuals who may need more time to fully process the information presented. The other concern regarding the recordings of the presentation raises: should it be the responsibility of SSSP or the

individual making the request? Can the recording be done discreetly using modern technology? If the recordings or transcripts are to be made available to persons, how do we identify those that are eligible?

In closing, I would like to thank Héctor and Michele for their support and assistance. Additionally, on behalf of the members of the Accessibility Committee, I would like to take this opportunity that thank Héctor for all the years of faithful service to SSSP and to wish him well on the first day of the rest of his life.