

July 15, 2025

TO: SSSP Board of Directors
RE: 2025 Program Committee Report
From: Assata Zerai, Ph.D., On Behalf of the 2025 SSSP Annual Meeting Program
Committee for the 75th Anniversary Conference, August 8-10, Chicago, Illinois

SSSP President Rose M. Brewer appointed the following members to serve on the 2025 SSSP Program Committee (PC): Professors Melanie Bush, Walda Katz-Fishman, and Assata Zerai (chair), and Dr. Rahsaan Mahadeo. Prof. Brewer's theme was "Insurgent Sociology in a Time of Crisis." The PC met with Prof. Brewer monthly or bi-monthly from August 23, 2024, until January 31, 2025, the deadline for the submission of papers/abstracts for a total of seven times.

Ms. Michele Smith Koontz provided guidance, along with data on online submissions, registrations, and cancellations. By the submission deadline of January 31, 2025, 369 papers were submitted through the online submission portal, and an no additional papers were submitted by session organizers for a total of 369 submitted papers.

The PC continued to meet with Prof. Rose M. Brewer in the months of February – July 2025 for a total of 9 times. By July 13, 2025, 343 papers remained: 314 online submissions and 29 organizer-submitted papers. Session organizers added 30 papers after the January 31st deadline, but one asked to be removed.

There are 84 sessions on the program (not including three cancelled sessions): 5 plenary sessions, 25 thematic sessions, and 4 special sessions. There are 33 co-sponsored sessions, and 3 new sessions were added to accommodate extra papers by session organizers who received too many papers for a single session. Fifteen sessions had to be cancelled because they did not receive enough papers by deadline.

As of July 13, 2025, 438 people had registered for the meeting: 379 program participants and 59 non-program participants. Given that this report was due before the July 15th deadline, it is likely that Ms. Koontz will update these numbers at the board meeting.

Per the Board of Directors, all program participants were required to register by June 1, 2025. Our office has sent numerous reminders since that deadline. On July 9, Kelsey sent a personalized email via Outlook to 28 program participants who had not yet registered or informed us they would not be attending. That message provided a final deadline of 11:59pm on July 15 to complete registration. As of July 13th, 25 individuals have neither registered nor responded. If payment is not received by the final deadline, they will be removed from the program on July 16. Organizers will remain listed as they did the work.

The PC solicited organizers and/or participants for 19 sessions in total, including a number of the sessions held at every annual meeting (e.g., Presidential Address, Opening Plenary, the SSSP Business Meeting, Publishing Tips from the Editors of *Social Problems*). The PC proposed several additional sessions that reflect the 2025 Conference Theme: Insurgent Sociology in Times of Crises. Some of these included: Connecting and Navigating SSSP as an Insurgent Scholar: Getting the Most Out of Conference and Academic Association Affiliations; Resistance and Survival; Revolutionary Possibilities: Confronting Capitalist Crises and Fascist Forces with Transformative Theory and Practice; Universities Confronting their Past: Social Justice Approaches to Confront and Address Complex Legacies of Harm; the Workshop: The Insurgency will not be De-Radicalized: Resisting Counterinsurgent Forces Inside and Outside the University; Breaking Free from Liberal White Supremacy to a Radical Feminist Collective: The Journey towards Building Intentional Community-Based, Insurgent Spaces in Sociology; Performing Reflections: Art-based Praxis as a Resource for Self-reflection; Critical Dialogue: Handbook of Social Justice, edited by Former SSSP President Corey Dolgon; and Sociologists as Workers and Political Actors in Today's Multiracial and Multigendered Working Class Struggle.

In compliance with Board requirements, the PC also organized an Author Meets Critics session (AMC). This included an invited session with the author of *Funk the Clock: Transgressing Time while Young, Perceptive, and Black*. The PC considered a second book following a call to the membership for nominations of books published in 2023 or 2024. In response to that call, we received 8 nominations, but 4 were disqualified because the nominators were either not current SSSP members or self-nominations; current SSSP membership is required for AMC book nominators and self-nominations are not accepted. The PC reviewed the 4 eligible books and decided to feature all 4 of the books that were eligible in a special session title, "New Books of Interest to SSSP cosponsored by Gender, Sexual Behavior, Politics, and Communities". Unfortunately, 3 of the 4 authors later indicated that they will not attend the 2025 SSSP Conference. So, we will feature one author, Dr. Nora Gross and her book *Brothers in Grief*.

As PC Chair, I also received a request from SSSP members for space to hold a Radical Feminist Collective (RFC) meeting. Michele Smith Koontz indicated that space is available on Sunday, 8/11, following the conclusion of the last sessions on the program (all sessions end by 4:10pm; but we have rooms reserved until 6:10pm). We noted that Executive Officer Elroi J. Windsor approved granting this space request last year and given that the members of the RFC are SSSP members and are presenting in other sessions, we were happy to honor this request.

Finally, on behalf of the PC, I extend our endless gratitude to Administrative Officer Ms. Michele Smith Koontz, and her assistant, Ms. Kelsey Whitaker, for their guidance and support throughout this process. They were extremely patient as we learned the SSSP Program software and of course they knew the answers to all our questions and replied

quickly to our many email queries. Ms. Koontz was willing to join our Program Committee meetings to provide updates and answer questions. It was truly a joy to work with Ms. Koontz and Ms. Whitaker. We also appreciate Executive Officer Prof. Elroi J. Windsor for their support, encouragement, and assistance along the way. We are also grateful to President Rose M. Brewer for entrusting us with the critically important responsibilities under the auspices of the PC.

Action Items for the Board

Action Item #1:

In our PC-sponsored sessions, we are organizing several discussions about the future of SSSP and the ways we can return to our roots as an organization that was set up as an insurgent response to the American Sociological Association. **We recommend that the Board charge a taskforce of engaged members to lead a year-long discussion about the future of SSSP**, charged with the following goals:

- A. Though the primary base of SSSP is sociologists, many of whom are interdisciplinary in their intellectual training, we recommend the Society actively work to reconstruct the identity of SSSP as an inter-, trans-, multi-, and anti-disciplinary association. As a counternarrative to ASA, SSSP's membership consists of a diversity of academic and non-academic backgrounds. This rebranding is integral to supporting and reflecting the diverse background of its members and also helping expand SSSP membership by drawing from a wider base of scholars, activists, artists, and many others who share in the mission and vision of the association;
- B. Establish mechanisms for on-ramping for scholars outside of the social sciences and public scholars into SSSP;
- C. Establish clear agreements between SSSP and community organizers and activists who share their knowledge, expertise, and skills. These agreements should make clear what community organizers/organizations might receive in return for their contributions. For example, SSSP can offer organizers/activists honorary memberships and networking opportunities with members, universities, and other potential sites of recruitment or amplification;
- D. Consider how we can better engage and support early-career scholars considering the realities of this difficult moment in higher education.

Action Item #2: We recommend that the SSSP Board address the financial limitations of its members. It may be useful to establish a task force to address the following: How will we create access to SSSP and its conference for members who are affected by federal budget cuts in 2025 and beyond? Due to cuts to F & A fees to universities with grants funded by NIH, NSF, and the like, as well as loss of tuition and other types of funding, support for travel will be limited for faculty at many of our institutions. Other considerations:

- A. Consider additional ways to make membership and conference registration fees more affordable for vulnerable colleagues in various circumstances.
- B. Better publicize roommate matching for any members interested in staying at the conference hotel, but who also cannot afford to pay the entire cost of a reservation on their own.
- C. Expand opportunities for virtual participation, especially for those who wish to attend annual meetings but cannot because of the cost. One possible option would be to offer a lower conference registration fee for participants who are online-only. This would be particularly significant for international participants.
- D. Consult with the International Sociological Association (ISA) and other international associations to establish greater opportunities to increase participation among international members, especially those from the global south.
- E. And work with our own Global Division, largely populated by international members to better understand barriers to participation in SSSP and to explore ways to enhance their experience.

Action Item #3. We encourage the SSSP Board to establish ties with labor unions, such as the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Taking up such an affiliation would be an action in line with the original intentions of the founders of SSSP.

- A. Unions are fighting to preserve free speech and academic freedom, two rights that are foundational to university culture.
- B. The National AAUP has filed a [lawsuit](#) alongside the Harvard University chapter of AAUP to block unlawful funding cuts.
- C. We recommend that the Board conduct research on AAUP and other relevant unions and to meet with SSSP membership to determine how they help to defend our members, our disciplines, and our work.
- D. Prof. Rose M. Brewer as SSSP president, Prof. Walda Katz-Fishman as a member of the program committee, and Prof. Elroi Windsor as executive officer have already made initial contact with AAUP, beginning conversations about the relationship of professional associations to AAUP.