

SSSP: Important Update regarding Remote Presentation Policy

May 6, 2025

Dear SSSP program participants,

In the last few months, SSSP leadership has received a number of inquiries regarding [our remote presentation policy](#). Some members have expressed concerns about traveling to the annual meeting in Chicago due to increasingly hostile federal policies and practices and potential risks in crossing international borders.

I want you to know that we take these concerns seriously. We understand – and some of us are directly impacted by – the ways the current political climate disproportionately affects people from marginalized communities.

The Board of Directors discussed issues related to remote participation over two meetings. We considered options in the context of program participants' plans, logistical factors, and financial constraints. Ultimately, **the Board will retain SSSP's remote presentation policy, but with some additional accommodations to support the participation of scholars who cannot attend in person.**

First, the Board acknowledged the extraordinary circumstances affecting many members who are afraid to travel to the annual meetings. While the Board would like to approve virtual attendance, the SSSP is financially strained. The costs of providing options for virtual participation are exorbitant, and the Board regrets that it cannot approve these requests due to [its current financial crisis](#).

The Board decided not to change its current policy on virtual attendance, which allows for remote presentation options for paid meeting registrants who have a disability and people who have a medical condition for which a medical professional would advise against in-person attendance. Note that this policy is based on the honors system; SSSP does not ask people to provide documentation.

The Board recommended that those who have registered for the annual meeting and are fearful of traveling are encouraged to **submit a written copy of their paper(s) to be distributed and read at the appropriate session at the annual meetings.** Participants interested in this option should contact the session organizer or president to request the distribution and reading of their paper.

In addition to these actions by the Board, the SSSP [Transnational Initiatives Committee](#), the [Anti-Harassment Committee](#), and the [Accessibility Committee](#) are reviewing the current climate and preparing resources for our community. By this summer, we aim to provide members with information about legal resources and travel advisories. We plan to host a virtual webinar in July for meeting participants to help provide attendees with information, advice, and support as they prepare for travels.

Finally, members may [request a Letter of Invitation](#) signed by the Executive Officer, which may assist with border crossings. Given the political climate, you may request that we include only minimal information about your participation and can leave off more sensitive information (e.g., a paper title that reflects your critical scholarship).

We realize this decision is not what some of you hoped for, and we regret we are not in a position to accommodate everyone who has concerns or limitations that inhibit traveling to an in-person meeting. We will continue to review our existing policies now and in the future, with the goal of being as inclusive as possible while also maintaining our organizational expenses.

If you have additional questions or comments, please reach out to me at ewindsor@westga.edu. For logistical assistance, please reach out to our administrative office at sssp@utk.edu.

Sincerely,

Elroi J. Windsor
SSSP Executive Officer