

**2024–2025 SSSP BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 2025; 11:30 AM – 4:30 PM (CDT)**

**PALMER HOUSE HILTON HOTEL, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
BUCKINGHAM ROOM, 5th FLOOR
MEETING CONDUCTED IN-PERSON WITH SELECT ATTENDEES VIA ZOOM**

ITEM #1 – CALL TO ORDER

President Rose M. Brewer called the meeting to order at 11:45 am. The meeting was convened in the Buckingham Room at the Palmer House Hilton, with a working lunch buffet available. Members attended both in person and via Zoom. The President welcomed all attendees and confirmed the start of the annual Board meeting.

ITEM #2 – INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees, including officers, board members, committee chairs, and ex-officio members, introduced themselves. Zoom participants were acknowledged to ensure inclusive participation. The introductions set a collegial tone for the meeting.

Members Present:

Rose M. Brewer, President
Sarah Jane Brubaker, President-Elect
Mary Bernstein, Past President v*
David J. Luke, Vice-President
Claire E.B. Cannon, Vice-President-Elect
Glenn W. Muschert, Secretary
Heather E. Dillaway, Treasurer
Meghna Bhat, Board Member
Jerome Krase, Board Member
Janelle M. Pham, Board Member
Claire M. Renzetti, Board Member
Barbara Katz Rothman, Board Member
Cameron T. Whitley, Board Member v*
Rafia Javaid Mallick, Board Member, Student Representative
Shannon K. Carter, *Ex-Officio*, Chairperson, Council of Division Chairs
Carlos Gonzales, Chair, Committee on Social Media v*
Sarah Levine, Publisher, Humanities & Social Sciences, Oxford University Press
Sarah E. Castillo, Chair, Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee v*
Assata Zerai, Chair, Program Committee
Kayla M. Martensen, Chair, Local Arrangement Committee
Andrew S. Fullerton, Editor, *Social Problems*
Elroi J. Windsor, Executive Officer
Michele Koontz, Administrative Officer and Meeting Manager

Note: "v*" indicates virtual participation.

Vote format: (Vote: XX-YY-ZZ) NN, where XX = Yes, YY = No, ZZ = abstain, and NN = no vote.

ITEM #3 – ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Board reviewed the proposed agenda for the meeting. President Brewer invited any revisions or additions. No changes were proposed, and the agenda was adopted as presented. The Board proceeded to the following item.

ITEM #4 – REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Executive Officer (EO) Elroi J. Windsor reflected on the Society's 75th anniversary and ongoing financial challenges. The EO highlighted a successful fundraising campaign and strong member support for the new mission and values statements. The Board discussed the UTK contract and unresolved staffing and budget issues. The Board approved the adoption of the Mission and Values Statements and emphasized their integration into governance documents.

SUB-ITEM A. Report from Dr. Stephanie Bohon, SSSP Project Director

EO Elroi J. Windsor presented the Report from Dr. Stephanie Bohon, SSSP Project Director at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Major points: UTK contract and staffing issues are ongoing, including challenges with payroll, fringe benefits, and accounting system transitions. There is a challenge with the Graduate Research Assistant funding, and the budgeting issue is unresolved; negotiations are ongoing. There is optimism for continued partnership.

SUB-ITEM B. Discuss the UTK Contract (1/1/22–12/31/26)

SUB-ITEM C. Discuss the Membership Survey Results

- This year's Membership Survey was redesigned to reflect emerging issues and included input from current, past, and prospective members. With 156 responses, the survey addressed topics like division restructuring, funding ideas, and mission and values statements. The results showed strong support for establishing clear organizational values, which several groups are reviewing to guide future decisions.

SUB-ITEM D. *Discuss the Future of the SSSP*

- The EO noted the ongoing financial challenges experienced by the SSSP. Noting that the Society recently welcomed a new Financial Advisor. In addition, the recent fundraising campaign was more effective, realizing triple the donations in 2024 vs. 2023. The future of the SSSP also relies on establishing and communicating its mission and values.
- **ACTION: The Board approved the adoption of the Mission and Values Statements as written in the 2025 Membership Survey, with two minor**

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additions, and foreground them in the By-Laws, Operations Manual, and website. (Vote: 14-0-0).

Mission Statement: SSSP's mission is to serve researchers, practitioners, **teachers**, and advocates in the pursuit of social justice.

Values Statements:

- SSSP is dedicated to advancing social justice, addressing inequalities, and dismantling oppression.
- SSSP uses sociology **and related disciplines** for action to solve social problems and improve the world through advocacy, activism, and active engagement.
- SSSP prioritizes critical inquiry, reflection, and research to engage in evidence-based scholarship and challenge assumptions.
- SSSP recognizes the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and the interconnectedness of social problems.
- SSSP illuminates how social structures perpetuate interlocking social inequalities, highlights how power and privilege are relational, and addresses systemic barriers to social justice.
- SSSP emphasizes equity, empathy, and respect in improving the quality of life, fostering social relations, and creating a sustainable and more just world for individuals and communities impacted by social problems.
- SSSP honors our diverse community, where networks and alliances aim to amplify the voices of marginalized people.

ACTION: The Board approved the report from the Executive Officer. (Vote: 14-0-0).

ITEM #5 – REPORT FROM THE EDITORS OF *SOCIAL PROBLEMS*

Editors Andrew S. Fullerton, Michael A. Long, Rachel M. Schmitz, and Kelley J. Sittner reported journal performance, including an Impact Factor of 2.9 (2024) and stable acceptance rates. Special issues and new social media initiatives were highlighted: “The Lives (and Futures) of Black Children and Youth” and “Racism of Omission.” The Board discussed the proposed 2025–2026 Advisory Board and the Social Media Committee report. The editors expressed optimism about future submissions and outreach.

ACTION: The Board approved the report from the Editors of *Social Problems*. (Vote: 14-0-0).

ACTION: The Board approved the proposed 2025–2026 Advisory Board (with membership status check). (Vote: 14-0-0).

SUB-ITEM A. Report from the *Social Problems* Social Media Committee Chair

Committee Chair Carlos Gonzales presented the committee’s new initiatives on new platforms (BlueSky and Instagram), including the Author’s Attic video series and Early Career Spotlight.

**ACTION: The Board approved the Social Media Committee report.
(Vote: 14-0-0).**

ITEM #6 – REPORT FROM OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Sarah Levine presented the OUP report, noting a new 5-year contract with a 60% royalty and \$120,000 signing bonus. Traditional subscriptions are declining, but open access and Read & Publish deals are growing. Author satisfaction remains high, with some concerns about submission guidelines. OUP will continue monitoring publishing trends and author experience.

ACTION: The Board approved the report from Oxford University Press. (Vote: 14-0-0).

ITEM #7 – FINANCES

Treasurer Heather E. Dillaway presented the financial report, noting net assets of \$861,378 as of December 31, 2024. The Society experienced a deficit of \$34,258, smaller than projected, but recurring deficits remain a concern. The Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee (BFA) emphasized the need for increased revenue and reduced expenses. The Board has already approved hiring Ellen Rapier as Financial Advisor and endorsed a schedule of percentage increases for dues and registration fees.

ACTION: The Board approved the report of the SSSP Treasurer (Vote: 14-0-0).

SUB-ITEM A. LBMC Client Service Communication Letter

The LBMC Client Service Communication Letter provides an overview of the audit process and the responsibilities of both the auditors and the Society's management. LBMC confirmed that they issued an unmodified (clean) opinion on the Society's financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, and communicated all required matters to the Board. The letter also notes that LBMC performed certain services, such as drafting financial statements and maintaining depreciation schedules, and will prepare the Society's informational tax returns.

**ACTION: The Board approved the LBMC Client Service Communication Letter.
(Vote: 14-0-0).**

SUB-ITEM B. 2024 Audit Report

The 2024 Audit Report by LBMC confirmed no significant issues or misstatements in the Society's financial statements.

ACTION: The Board approved the 2024 Audit Report. (Vote: 14-0-0).

SUB-ITEM C. Report from the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee Chair

Sarah E. Castillo, Chair of the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee (BFA), presented a report expressing ongoing concern about the Society's immediate and long-term financial health. The BFA highlighted that significant annual deficits are now commonplace, driven by declining membership, operating losses on in-person meetings, rising personnel costs, and uncertain journal revenue. The report emphasized that income from membership dues has decreased significantly, and that the Society is subsidizing annual meeting attendees at an unsustainable rate. The BFA urged the Board to act swiftly to increase revenue streams and decrease expenses and expressed gratitude to the Administrative Office for its diligent financial management. The Committee recommended implementing the following actions to ensure the Society's financial sustainability. Recommendations indicated a periodic increase in annual meeting registration fees, the revision of division sunseting policies, and a regular increase in membership dues. The BFA also recommends continued cost-cutting and revenue diversification efforts. The BFA also recommended the revision of divisional sunseting policies. The Board heard this recommendation, but did not discuss it at this meeting, because this topic will appear in the Council of Division Chairs meeting. Thus, the Board awaits feedback from the Council of Division Chairs, prior to its discussion of this topic.

ACTION: The Board approved an increase in membership dues by a minimum of 20% every three years, starting in 2028 (subject to membership vote at the 2027 Annual Business Meeting). (Vote: 10-1-3).

ACTION: The Board approved an increase in annual meeting registration fees by a minimum of 20% every three years, starting in 2027. (Vote: 10-1-3).

ACTION: The Board approved the Report of the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee. (Vote: 14-0-0).

SUB-ITEM D. 2025 Amended Budget

SSSP Treasurer Heather E. Dillaway presented the amended budget for 2025, which projects total revenue of \$599,087 and total expenditures of \$769,119, resulting in a projected deficit of \$170,032. The budget incorporates a one-time \$120,000 signing bonus from Oxford University Press, which significantly reduces the projected deficit for the year. Without this bonus, the deficit would be nearly twice as large. The budget reflects ongoing efforts to control costs and diversify revenue, but also underscores the need for further action to address the Society's structural financial challenges.

ACTION: The Board approved the 2025 amended budget as presented. (Vote: 14-0-0).

SUB-ITEM E. 2025 Draft July Balance Sheet

The July 2025 draft balance sheet provides a snapshot of the Society's financial position as of July 31, 2025. Total assets are reported at \$1,092,847.54, including cash, investments, and fixed assets. Liabilities total \$33,612.22, primarily accounts payable and accrued expenses, while net assets are \$1,059,235.32. The balance sheet reflects the Society's continued reliance on reserves to cover operating deficits and highlights the importance of ongoing financial oversight and strategic planning to ensure long-term sustainability.

SUB-ITEM F. 2025 Draft July Income Statement

The July 2025 draft income statement compares actual revenues and expenses to budgeted amounts and the previous year. As of July 31, 2025, total revenue is \$442,977.25, while functional total expenditures are \$246,119.49, resulting in a positive change in net assets. However, the year-to-date figures also show that the Society continues to face challenges in meeting revenue targets, particularly in membership dues and meeting income. The income statement underscores the need for cost-cutting and revenue generation.

ITEM #8 – REPORT FROM THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE CHAIR

Program Committee Chair Assata Zerai reported that 369 papers were submitted as of January 31, 2025. By July 31, 2025, 343 papers remained. There are 84 sessions (including five plenary, 25 thematic, and four special) currently on the program. The program reflects the conference theme and includes plenary and thematic sessions. The Board heard suggestions to form task forces to explore the Society's future and financial access. The Committee also proposed exploring formal ties with labor unions. The Board tabled the discussion of establishing a task force to address financial access for members (affordability, virtual participation, international engagement), to be revisited at the Sunday, August 10, 2025, Board of Directors meeting.

ACTION: The Board approved the Program Committee report. (Vote: 14-0-0).

ACTION: The Board charged the Membership and Outreach Committee to lead a year-long discussion about the future of SSSP. (Vote13-0-1). The mandate includes the following:

A. Though the primary base of SSSP is sociologists, many of whom are interdisciplinary in their intellectual training, we recommend that 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 diverse 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 broader base of

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scholars, activists, artists, and many others who share in the association's mission and vision.

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 could 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: The Board tasked the Committee on Social Action with exploring formal ties with labor unions and other non-academic organizations.

ITEM #9 – REPORT FROM THE LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chair Kayla M. Martensen reported on local tours and events, noting low ticket sales. The Chi-Nations Youth Council was selected for the Indigenous Peoples' Social Justice Award. The Board discussed revising deadlines and discontinuing walking tours. Revised LAC duties were approved, including removing the stipend (See ITEM 10, SUB-ITEM D, below).

ACTION: The Board approved the report of the Local Arrangements Committee. (Vote: 14-0-0).

ITEM #10 – REPORT FROM THE MEETING MANAGER

Meeting Manager Michele Koontz reported 439 registrants, down from 535 in 2024. Among these were 47% professional, 48% student/unemployed, underemployed, emeritus, and 5% exempt. Accessibility features and catering logistics were reviewed. The Board clarified that receptions offer light fare and updated the refund policy. The Palmer House was confirmed as the 2027 conference site.

SUB-ITEM AB. Current Annual Meeting Registrants and Membership by State/Country

This year's attendance is lower than in recent years. For comparison (at the time of her report):

In Chicago in 2025, we have scheduled:

- 83 sessions with 322 papers

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- 11 panels featuring 52 panelists
- 3 critics, and
- 1 plenary speaker.

In comparison, the 2024 meeting in Montréal included:

- 113 sessions with 436 papers
- 9 panels with 37 panelists
- 7 critics, and
- 1 plenary speaker.

ACTION: The Board approved adding “nor will registration fees be carried over to a future Annual Meeting” to the last sentence of the current refund policy. (Vote: 14-0-0).

Current Refund Policy

ANNUAL MEETING: Registration fees will be refunded to persons who notify us that they will not attend the Annual Meeting before July 15. Once the participant packets have been prepared, processing costs have occurred. Unfortunately, under no circumstances will SSSP issue refunds for no-shows, **nor will registration fees be carried over to a future Annual Meeting.**

SUB-ITEM B. Meeting Attendance, 1985–2024

Past meetings included (at the time of her report):

- 535 in 2024 (Montréal)
- 579 in 2023 (Philadelphia)
- 480 in 2022 (Los Angeles)
- 769 in 2021 (fully virtual)
- 120 in 2020 (half-day complimentary virtual)
- 995 in 2019 (New York City)

SUB-ITEM C. Update on the 2027 Annual Meeting Hotel Contract Selection

Meeting Manager Michele Koontz is negotiating with the Palmer House, a Hilton Hotel, for our 2027 Annual Meeting. For the hotel to waive sleeping room performance (attrition) on the 2025 contract, the 2027 contract must be signed by August 27, 2025.

ACTION: In recognition of rising food and beverage costs and to promote responsible budgeting and transparent communication, the Board affirmed that receptions held during the Annual Meeting are intended to offer light fare and refreshments, not full meals. Morning and afternoon breaks will likewise feature modest offerings (e.g., coffee, tea, and light snacks). This guideline will be shared with meeting attendees to set appropriate expectations and help future

planners align catering decisions with budgetary realities. (Vote: 14-0-0).

ACTION: The Board approved ending the subsidizing or providing of alcoholic beverages at all receptions. (Vote: 10-3-1).

ACTION: Given the consistent challenges with low ticket sales and the significant time and effort required of the Local Arrangements Committee to identify wheelchair-accessible social justice walking tours, the Board discontinued the walking tours at future Annual Meetings. (Vote: 12-0-2).

ACTION: The Board approved the proposed revision of the Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) duties, reflecting the removal of the LAC Chair stipend approved in 2024. The revised responsibilities streamline the committee's scope, eliminating hotel, media, and local promotion duties, while maintaining program-related Welcome to the City contributions, including suggestions about special activities, including tours, and the selection of a recipient for the Indigenous Peoples' Social Justice Award. If approved, the Board is also asked to authorize updating the SSSP By-laws accordingly, with changes presented to the membership for a vote in the 2026 General Election. (Vote: 14-0-0).

BY-LAWS EXCERPT: ARTICLE VI, SECTION 13:

The Local Arrangements Committee shall consist of a Chairperson and at least one member residing in the local area where the Annual Meeting will be held the following year. The President-Elect shall nominate, and the Board of Directors shall appoint the Committee Chairperson. In consultation with the Committee Chairperson, the President-Elect shall nominate, and the Board of Directors shall appoint, the other committee members. The duties of the committee shall be to assist the Program Committee and the Administrative Office in preparation for the Annual Meeting of the Society. Specific duties include: **identify a local organization or organizations for the Indigenous Peoples' Social Justice Award and make a recommendation to the Board of Directors; write one Welcome to the City; provide referrals to local services available; arrange special activities in keeping with the theme of the Annual Meeting.**

ITEM #11 – UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM 2024–2025

SSSP President Rose M. Brewer referred the Board to the following unfinished business.

SUB-ITEM A. Unfinished Business Carried Over from 4/29/25 Board of Directors Meeting

Excerpt from 4/29/25 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Vote format: (Vote: XX-YY-ZZ) NN, where XX = Yes, YY = No, ZZ = abstain, and NN = no vote.

ITEM #6 – CONTINUED DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDED IN THE REVISED REPORT FROM THE AD HOC COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND THE SOCIETY’S VALUES Ad Hoc Committee Member Rafia Javaid Mallick presented the report of the committee on behalf of Clare E. B. Cannon, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, focusing on the report’s highlights and recommendations. 1. Develop a social media platform policy. 2. Schedule revisiting that policy every 2 or 3 years. 3. Do not create a standing committee to do this, but have an ad hoc committee from the board to develop and review the policy. 4. Recommend more social justice messaging across platforms. 5. If the Board approves recommendation 4, recommend establishing a service position for a strategic communications person. This person must be carefully selected as they require skills, tech, and media savvy. 6. Separate from social media platform policy, consider connecting with and supporting other organizations in their advocacy efforts (ASA, APHA suits), such as coordination (e.g., file amicus briefs, etc.). 7. The Committee did not reach consensus on whether to drop social media platforms; instead, it has outlined options for the board to consider and weigh. The Board discussed the recommendations. However, due to a lack of quorum, the item was tabled until the next Board meeting. No action was taken at this time.

The Board reopened discussion on the topic of social media. The Board entertained a motion that the Society would leave X (formerly Twitter). This motion did not pass. (Vote: 3-10-1).

ACTION: The Board approved the Report from the Ad Hoc Committee to Examine the Use of Social Media Platforms and the Society’s Values, noting that the Ad Hoc Committee had discharged its mandate. (Vote: 14-0-0).

ITEM #12 – NEW BUSINESS

President Brewer invited new business items. No additional motions were raised during the meeting. The Board agreed to defer any late submissions to future meetings. The agenda proceeded to adjournment.

ITEM #13 – ADJOURNMENT OF THE 2024–2025 BOARD

There being no further business, President Rose M. Brewer adjourned the meeting at 4:40pm. The Board expressed appreciation for the contributions of all members. The meeting concluded with plans to attend the Opening Plenary and the Meet & Greet Reception.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Glenn W. Muschert, SSSP Secretary

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ADDENDUM #1 – RECORD OF BOARD ACTIONS CONDUCTED VIA EMAIL SINCE THE APRIL 29, 2025, BOARD MEETING

ACTION: 5/02/25 – The Board approved Dr. Beeman’s request to contact the relevant nominees and nominators, providing them with a deadline to update their membership status so their nominations may be considered. (Vote: 14-1-1) 1

ACTION: 5/20/25 – The Board approved the revised minutes from the April 29, 2025, Zoom Board Meeting. (Vote: 15-0-1) 1

ACTION: 6/13/25 – The Board approved that Proposed Resolution 1 will advance and be posted to the Society’s website for membership comment. (Vote: 16-0-0) 1

ACTION: 6/17/25 – The Board approved that Ellen Rapier, an Advisor with The Oak Tree Group, Ltd, has been officially approved to serve as the Society’s Financial Advisor. (Vote: 15-0-1) 0

ACTION: 6/30/25 – The Board approved that SSSP will move forward with signing a contract with the Palmer House for our 2027 Annual Meeting, contingent on securing the 2025 attrition waiver. (Vote: 15-0-0) 2

ACTION: 7/25/25 – The Board approved the Authorization for Financial and Investment Account Signers language. (Vote: 16-0-0) 0

ACTION: 8/04/25 – The Board approved that Faryal Razzaq will serve on the Board of Directors for the 2025-2027 term, and Muhammed Faisol Olaitan will serve on the Anti-Harassment Committee for the 2025-2028 term. (Vote: 16-0-0) 0

Respectfully submitted by Glenn Muschert, SSSP Secretary.