

**Teaching Social Problems 2025 Annual Division Meeting**  
**Wednesday, July 3, 2025 (1 pm EST) via Zoom**

Attendees: Morena Tartari (chair), Janelle Pham (chair-elect), Jacqueline Zalewski (member), Nick Payton (member), Perri Leviss (member)

Meeting agenda:

1. Division's proposed budget
2. Sessions for the 2026 SSSP meeting.
3. Upcoming division newsletter.
4. Student paper award Special division activities for the next year
5. Special division activities for the next year
6. Publishing projects

**Agenda #1 - Division's proposed budget**

Chair presents the budget to the chair-elect and members.

A short discussion about the role of social media coordinator and newsletter editor takes place. Jacqueline Zalewski spread the word about these roles with her students and someone seems interested in covering one of the roles.

Chair provides explanations about the current social media accounts of the Division and will provide to pass the credentials to Janelle Pham.

**Agenda #2 – 2026 AM Sessions**

The chair presents the different types of sessions that the division can organize as for SSSP rules. Moreover, the Chair explains that the Division can plan two Division sessions (one of which should be on the conference theme) and then up to 5 co-sponsored sessions.

Topic of the 2025 SSSP annual meeting in NYC is: **“Resisting Colonization of Lifeworlds”**

Ideas for individual sessions come from the following members.

Jacqueline Zalewski proposes a co-sponsored session with the Education problems Division about curricular politics.

Perri Leviss proposes a pedagogical session about “how do we actually teach”, how we create critical discourse around this time period and then how we actually teach difficult topics. Perri thinks that multiple sessions on this topic can be possible because there are multiple subtopics. For instance, a subtopic is how to create an environment for critical thinking in our classes and how we maintain that environment. Moreover, about how we think about our syllabi and readings in a period like this.

Janelle Pham proposes a reflection about how these topics would nicely dovetail with the incoming president's theme for next year, which is resisting colonisation of

life worlds. So, topics like “how do we create sites for a critical discourse” knowing the changes that are happening for our students fits with Sarah Jane Brubaker's theme for 2026.

Furthermore, Perri Leviss proposes a session for graduate students who are navigating these issues differently to give them a motivation to attract graduate students' participations.

Janelle Pham proposes to turn a session into more of a workshop style approach or a simple round table in which we can discuss practices or data, what we have done and how it worked or not and get feedback, like a discussion about works in progress, since teaching it is always a work in progress. A session that is more a workshop focused around helping each other increase our pedagogical approaches.

### **Agenda #3 – Materials for Division's newsletter**

Chair explains that the Division newsletter needs to be downloaded by all member: to reach this goal we need to advertise more the newsletter through SSSP social media, email, and increase members' involvement and participation. It is possible to add a feature story about innovative teaching methods, interviews to senior and junior members about how they teach social problems and engage in public sociology. To improve the Newsletter we need more members' participation in writing and an editor. In the 2023-24 we had two issues, but in 2024-25 only one issue since it was discussed to keep it at the minimum of one issue per year as suggested by members because it is not enough downloaded.

Pros and cons of the newsletter are discussed. Newsletter is seen as an outdated tool that needs to be reconsidered at a general SSSP level because it seems not working properly (i.e., members are not interested in downloading and reading it). Chair explains that she sent several reminders to all the members multiple times to download the newsletter, but still we have a few downloads. Therefore, the financial situation does not allow us to pay for an editor if there are only a few members interested in reading the newsletter.

### **Agenda #4 student paper competition**

Chair explains that in 2023-2024 we had a student paper competition with only one submission. In 2024-25 we received no submissions. It is perhaps time to rethink this award. We proposed a short paper (max 2000 words) to respond to the question: “What is the joy you find in teaching social problems?” and 200 dollars for the award.

Members discuss about the fact that this a tough division for student papers to be submitted to.

Chair suggests to consider the option of an award for a different category of participants (different stage of career).

Jaqueline Zaleswki suggests some kind of outstanding pedagogical assignment.

### **Agenda #5 Special division activities for the next year (e.g., workshop)**

Chair explains about the organization of the the Division workshop at this year annual meeting. She has also prepared a proposal for a next year workshop and discussed with chair-elect (deadline 15 July).

The difficulties met to organize this year's workshop and the likes/dislikes toward the virtual format (e.g. the fact that in-person participants to the annual meeting prefer attending in person, but at the same time many colleagues and students do not and will not have enough funds to participate in person, and so they prefer the virtual option) make the decision for a next year workshop difficult and controversial.

Chair-elect proposes to submit a proposal in 2026 for a workshop about professional development type topics that are built into the meeting (like those discussed above for the Division sessions).

### **Agenda #6 Publishing projects**

Members discuss possible publishing projects to propose or circulate among Division members (e.g., advertising call for chapters, contributions to TRAILS, etc).

Perri Leviss proposes a session/activity for the 2026 annual meeting on how to publish in these days, and a session on open educational resources.

Janelle Pham suggests developing opportunities for students to publish experiences about syllabi and methodologies that are using, with a focus on pedagogy. This can also become the new focus of the student paper competition (e.g., something like a class activity or a project).