

Date July 16, 2026

To: SSSP Board of Directors

RE: 2026 Program Committee Report

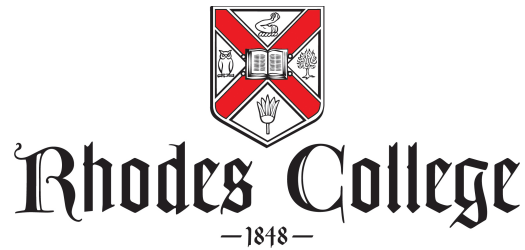
From: Hadi Khoshnevis, Ph.D., On Behalf of the 2026 Annual Meeting Program Committee for the 76th Annual Conference. August 6-9, NYC, NY

SSSP President Sarah Jane Brubaker appointed the following members to serve the 2026 SSSP Program Committee (PC): Professors Victor Chen, Hadi Khoshnevis (chair), Atticus Wolfe, and Zehra Sahin Ilkorkor as graduate student representative. The PC met with Dr. Brubaker several times depending on need. For instance, as we reviewed and selected two books for Author-Meets-Critics and organized new events such as a Virtual Poster Conference and Inaugural Virtual Town Hall Meeting.

Thanks to our Administrative Officer and Meeting Manager, Ms. Michele Smith Koontz, who provided constant insight and guidance throughout our programming efforts, by the submission deadline we had 406 papers submitted. By July 15, 2026, we had 88 sessions and 351 papers

In addition to planning for our annual meeting, the PC worked on some new initiatives. Considering the financial precarity facing our discipline and departments and concerns around traveling in an era of heightened surveillance, the PC organized a virtual mini conference. This effort was led by Dr. Wolfe. The conference was held on Friday, March 27, 2026. We had 36 registrations out of which 21 attended the conference. We had 9 presentations which could be found [HERE](#). The PC also held an online panel on *Publishing* on November 11, 2025.

An upcoming event is SSSP's Inaugural Virtual Townhall Meeting. This initiative directed by Dr. Sarah Jane Brubaker is scheduled for July 28, 2026. The townhall meeting is an effort to make decision-making accessible to SSSP members. In the light of what has transpired recently in other professional sociological associations, this is a noble effort that allows the leadership and members revisit and revive SSSP's commitment to shared governance. Challenges facing the higher education, sociology as a discipline, as well as scholarship, teaching, and activism are among the themes on the meeting's agenda. Panelists on townhall meeting will be comprised of

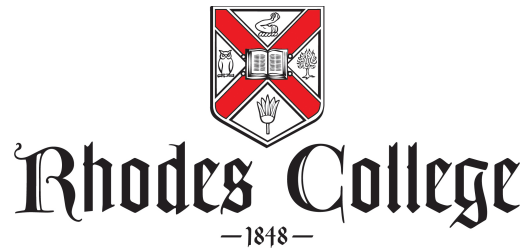


current elected officials at SSSP, including 2026 President and Executive Officer, as well as former officials and prominent active members and scholars such as Dr. Assata Zerai (2025 Program Chair).

These online events speak to the Action Item#2 (C) in the report from 2025 PC which recommended virtual meetings so that our members (1) can benefit from their membership beyond the annual meeting, (2) can have access to forums that do not require traveling and registration fees, (3) move SSSP further towards its goal and promise of transparency and shared governance.

In addition to online events, PC has organized a few sessions for the conference in NYC. Our graduate student representative has organized a panel on “Navigating Graduate School: Stress, Support, and Student Well-Being.” Dr. Brubaker has organized an Opening Plenary Session, titled “Engaging Lifeworlds as Resistance,” where several activists and scholars come together the evening before our conference starts. Additionally, the PC has organized three panels on relevant and urgent issues: “On Palestine,” a panel on “Teaching Hope, Joy, and Justice: Reclamation of Lifeworlds,” and a session on “Academic Freedom in the Current Climate: A Conversation with the Scholars at Risk Network.” In compliance with Board requirements, the PC also organized two Author Meets Critics session (AMC). This included an invited session with the author of *Anti-Racism as Communism* by Paul Gombert. This book was ranked unanimously as number one by the members of PC, and *Indefensible Spaces: Policing and the Struggle for Housing* by Rahim Kurwa.

After ASA President Shelley Correll and Executive Director Heather Washington wrote to the membership on March 12, 2026, explaining their rationale for refusing to put the member-led “[Resolution for the ASA Boycott of Israeli Academic Institutions](#)” on the April 2026 ballot, we received several inquiries from different sections and individuals about the possibility of using SSSP as an alternative platform and space (see the invitation to boycott ASA [HERE](#)). Our Executive Officer, Dr. Elroi J. Windsor, worked with Dr. Brubaker, Chair of the PC, and Michele Koontz to explore how we can support our colleagues and remain true to SSSP’s social justice mission. Once agreements achieved, Dr. Windsor communicated with the Board of Directors and sought their input and vote. The final proposal to provide multiple spaces for external groups was approved by the Board on June 18, 2026, with 16 Yes votes, zero no votes, and one abstain.

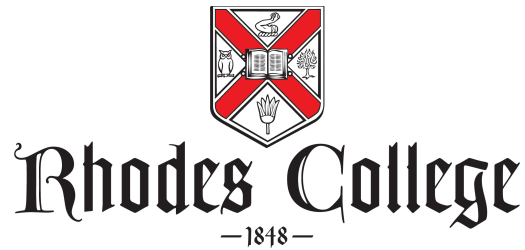


On behalf of the Program Committee, I express and extend my heartfelt thanks to our Administrative Officer and Meeting Manager, Michele Smith Koontz, and Kelsey Whitaker, Assistant to the Administrative Officer. Michele and Kelsey were always patient and provided clear and kind guidance. We are also grateful to our Executive Officer, Dr. Windsor who generously supported us along the way, and whenever needed generously came to our help. I am also grateful to Zehra Sahin Ilkorkor, our graduate student who served on PC, as well as Cami Touloukian and Uzma Chowdhury, our Local Arrangements Committee co-chairs. As the chair of the Program Committee, I am deeply and sincerely thankful to President Sarah Jane Brubaker for her trust in me and her confident, kind, and transparent leadership. It was truly a pleasure and honor to work with such a competent and supportive team.

Action Items

Considering the status of social sciences in general and sociology in particular in addition to the political attacks on our discipline, it seems urgent to think creatively about (1) our membership, (2) how we can support each other, maintain solidarity, and extend our reach.

- A. After our work with sociologists boycotting or leaving ASA, we recommend that SSSP comes up with an updated and transparent policy that draws on our recent experience and looks into the future of our organization to assess what our short-term and long-term plans for recruitment of new members and support of our existing members could be. Considering that our purpose is to “promote and protect” critical and social justice-oriented research, teaching, and activism, we can assess how we can further and better highlight our distinguishing features. For instance, our website can make clearer statements, and our social media presence can be enhanced. As a good model, I recommend European Sociological Association’s website. A decluttered website and a clear uncompromising statement of purpose can attract those who are looking for a clear stance in a political climate that demands and necessitates decisiveness.
- B. We recommend SSSP to explore how we can expand SSSP’s reach to and encourage scholars across disciplines as well as public scholars and activists to join and become active at SSSP. This effort can be pursued and expand through what was suggested in Action Item A, as well as more consistent and



targeted communication with sociology departments. Reminding sociology departments how SSSP (1) values and embraces students and junior faculty across disciplines, activists, and practitioners, and (2) prioritizes the integration of as scholarship, service, and activism through collaboration and mentorship can attract a large swath of potential members who are looking for new organizations. Potentially, Membership and Outreach, Committee on Mentorship, and Committee on Social Action can initiate these conversations with colleges and universities.

- C. We recommend continuing offering virtual events to make our members more engaged throughout the year and their membership more advantageous and beneficial. Dr. Brubaker's initiative to have our first virtual town hall meeting, for instance, can become an annual event held before our in-person meetings.
- D. Perhaps the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee along with the Program Committee can explore the possibility of working with European and International Sociological Associations to (1) build solidarity that can be crucial in times of crisis, (2) strengthen our organization foothold, (3) increase participation, collaboration, and exchange of ideas. Such collaborations can promote allyship and create a protective shield against political intrusions from outside.