

Disability, Mental Wellness and Social Justice Division

Business Meeting – July 3, 2026

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In attendance:

- Mindy Maconi (Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute) – Co-Chair 2024-2026
- Rebecca Qin (University of British Columbia) – Incoming Co-Chair 2026-2028
- Lily Ivanova (University of British Columbia) – Session Organizer 2024-2026; Incoming Co-Chair 2026-2028
- Justin Chen (University of Toronto)

Regrets:

- Olaitan Faisol (Co-Chair 2024-2026)
- Jill Manuel

Absent:

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| - Erica F Jablonski | - Monnica Gavin |
| - Esperanza Padilla | - Natasha Israt Kabir |
| - Ginger Berndt | - Rita Jacobs |
| - Lesley Siegel | |

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Attendance at the meeting

- There was a discussion about low attendance at the virtual meeting – 11 people confirmed availability, but only 4 in attendance. This could be due to poor scheduling (long weekend).
- It was discussed whether to continue with the meeting, or to switch to an in-person meeting
- It was decided to continue with the virtual meeting, and that an in-person informal meeting could be organized at the conference
- **To dos:** The organizers could organize an informal in-person meeting during the conference

Building community within the division

- Mindy suggested that sending a list of things to do in NYC in the area could be a nice way to create engagement with the division
- It was discussed what kind of things to include (e.g. close by, food options, cost)
- **To dos:** Mindy volunteered to make a list and send to the division ahead of the conference

Communication plan for the division

- Mindy asked about opinions on whether to communicate through a division newsletter, or through emails through the listserv
- Pros of the newsletter – there is a public record online where others could check out the division and make decisions about joining; Cons of the newsletter – have to organize creating it

- Rebecca mentioned that after the amalgamation of the two divisions (Mental Health and Society and Disability), the record of past newsletters for each of the divisions disappeared from the webpage
- There was a discussion about how retrieve past newsletters
- **To dos:** Someone to reach out to SSSP admin to ask about past newsletters

Graduate Paper Award

- Mindy asked about whether the division should budget an allowance for a Graduate Paper Award
- This past year, there was only one submission, and it didn't meet the eligibility criteria. The amount budgeted for this remains available, but will be returned to SSSP if unused
- There was a discussion about whether to have both a Graduate Paper Award and a **Regular Paper Award**. If budget is a concern, the Regular Paper Award may not need to come with a cash prize
- There was a discussion about the criteria for receiving a paper award; it was confirmed that the winner has to be a member of the division and also present the paper at the conference

Session topics for 2027

- Mindy asked whether to include a call for ideas for 2027 sessions in the division newsletter
- There was a discussion that there is still time to plan the sessions, but it would be good to head a head start on collecting ideas
- Additional notes: As a mid-sized division, our division can organize 2 solo sessions and 4 co-sponsored sessions. The session submissions are due September 2027

Recruitment strategy for the division

- Lily asked about how many members are a part of the division; it was confirmed that the division has 106 members at the moment
- There was a conversation about how many of the members are active; it was estimated that about 20 people are responsive, but 10 people might be considered more "active"
- It was discussed that the membership includes emeritus professors (who share opportunities with graduate students), other division chairs, and junior scholars
- There was a discussion about retention – if there were people submitting papers that only present that year

Building engagement opportunities

- There was a discussion about organizing **events** or **regular meetings** that could increase the amount of conversation and connection between members
- There were suggestions that organizing a **social event** at the conference could be a good way to facilitate members getting to know each other. Different ideas were discussed – for example, an art tour, or other types of city tours
- Another suggestion was creating a working group or a reading group.
 - o One concept was having a **virtual working group for "half-baked ideas"** that would be a low-barrier opportunity to meet and connect. There was some discussion about how to make sure this is a safe space for people sharing ideas without the risk of being scooped

- Another suggestion was to create a **reading group**, which could be even lower barrier. The division could select interesting and new work that would give members the opportunity to engage with work in the field while getting to know each other

- **To dos:**

- Lily to look into city tour ideas in NYC that are on topic for the division (e.g. NYC has a psychiatric tour). Update – it was decided that it might be too late to organize a tour for the 2026 conference; should start this work early for the 2027 conference
- Mindy to look into whether remaining funds from the division budget can be used for refreshments at an informal social gathering during the conference
- Rebecca to look into formats of other reading groups and consider logistics for organizing this