

IE Division Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Date: March 3, 2026
Time: 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM EST
Format: Virtual (Zoom)
Chair: Hans-Peter de Ruiter, Division Chair (Minnesota State Mankato)

Attendees

- Hans-Peter de Ruiter - Division Chair, Minnesota State Mankato
- Helen Hudson - PhD Candidate, University of Ottawa (Montreal)
- Brenda Solomon - University of Vermont, Social Work
- Suzan Vaughan - Professor Emeritus, Arizona State University
- Clay Michael Awsumb - Assistant Professor of Criminology, Northwest Missouri State University
- Emily Johnson -Recent PhD Graduate
- Gina Petonito - Retired (formerly Miami University, Oxford); Newsletter Editor since aprox 2014
- Joaquin Arguello -ABD, Language, Literacy, Sociocultural Studies; University of New Mexico
- Laura Parson - School of Education, North Dakota State University
- Paul Luken - Emeritus Faculty

1. Newsletter and LinkedIn Updates

A. Recognition of Gina Petonito

The Chair opened by thanking Gina Petonito for her decade of dedicated service as newsletter editor. Gina shared that due to health challenges following cancer treatment in 2022, including significant hearing loss, she is unable to continue attending in-person conferences and feels it is time to transition the newsletter to a new editor.

Gina's proposed transition plan:

- In 2026, a new co-editor would serve alongside Gina and learn the process
- In 2027, the new editor would take full ownership
- Estimated time commitment: approximately 10 hours per newsletter issue
- The newsletter is currently produced twice per year (previously three)

B. Future of the Newsletter

SSSP has made the division newsletter optional (previously required), partly due to financial considerations and low engagement in some divisions. Discussion centered on whether IE should continue the newsletter.

Key points from discussion:

- Strong consensus in favor of continuing the newsletter
- Gina described the newsletter’s primary value as promoting members - highlighting new PhDs, award winners, and member vignettes
- Suzan noted the newsletter has been invaluable for discovering new IE scholars, identifying contributors for edited volumes, and tracking award history
- The newsletter is available as a PDF on the SSSP website, meaning distribution extends beyond those who receive the email
- Hans-Peter noted the LinkedIn page currently has 64 followers; social media and the newsletter serve different audiences
- Gina cautioned that effective social media requires significant expertise

A member sent Gina a direct message expressing potential interest in the editor role. Gina confirmed she would follow up directly.

Helen Hudson suggested any membership-wide call for a newsletter editor should be a standalone, urgent communication - not buried in meeting minutes - and should clearly convey that the newsletter will cease if no one steps forward.

Brenda Solomon proposed exploring whether a university department could host the newsletter role, with graduate student involvement and departmental recognition in exchange.

2. Membership Numbers

Metric	Count
Combined 2025–2026 membership	79
2026 renewals to date	49 (+ at least 1 pending)
Sustainability threshold	50 members

The division is currently at 49 renewals, but Hans-Peter confirmed at least one additional member has joined, putting the division at 50 and ensuring sustainability for 2026. Social media outreach and the current political climate were credited with supporting membership growth. IE was noted as having consistently strong conference participation relative to other divisions.

3. Awards Committees

A. Student Paper Award (George Smith Award)

- Helen Hudson reported the committee received two paper submissions
- A decision has not yet been made; the winner will be announced by April 1, 2026

B. Dorothy Smith Activist Award

Significant discussion clarified the nature and process of this award:

- Clarification from Paul Luken: The Thomas C. Kuhn Award (given by SSSP) goes to a New York-area organization. The Dorothy Smith Activist Award is given by the IE Division and is not restricted to local nominees.
- There is no formal requirement that the recipient be in the New York area, though in recent years the division has preferred local nominees to ensure in-person presentation of the award (e.g., Erica Miners in Chicago; Vivienne de Mast in Montreal).
- Suzan noted that historically, the committee did not receive open nominations - the committee itself conducted research to identify 2–3 worthy candidates, then solicited nomination letters from colleagues and students.
- It was acknowledged that the full committee process was not followed this year, partly due to confusion from the previous hybrid conference.

Resolution:

- Members are encouraged to suggest any scholar-activist whose work aligns with IE values - local or otherwise.
- If no suitable candidate is identified, the award will be skipped for 2026 and the formal committee process will be reestablished for 2027
- Hans-Peter will follow up with Paul Luken and Suzan to clarify the selection process going forward.

4. Budget 2026

The IE Division has a total budget of \$600 for 2026, allocated as follows:

Amount	Line Item	Notes
\$150	Newsletter Editor	
\$50	Newsletter Co-Editor	<i>Can be added to editor stipend if no co-editor</i>
\$100	Student Paper Award	
\$50	Other Awards (Dorothy Smith Activist Award)	<i>Covers cost of award frame</i>
\$250	Division Reception Contribution	<i>Symbolic; full reception cost is ~\$18,000</i>

Note: SSSP's board is considering reallocating budgets to give more to larger divisions and less to smaller ones, which could reduce the IE budget to approximately \$300. However, any changes would not take effect until the following year, so the \$600 budget is secure for 2026.

5. IE Workshop

- No IE workshop will be held in 2026
- The division holds \$4,964 in its workshop budget
- The 2025 workshop (held online) was considered less than ideal in format
- Proposal: Plan an in-person workshop for 2027, potentially with a separate online component, with a modest registration fee for those with professional degrees and free attendance for students

6. Conference 2026 (SSSP, New York)

Presentations

- An exceptionally high number of paper proposals were submitted this cycle
- Hans-Peter's session ("Health and IE") received 24 submissions; 18 had to be declined; session is at maximum capacity with 6 presentations.
- All identified IE papers were accepted for presentation across sessions.
- Hans-Peter opted not to moderate his own session in order to give a presenter the opportunity to share their work

IE Division Meeting at Conference

Discussion about whether to hold an in-person IE Division meeting at the conference:

- Hybrid format was deemed unworkable given connectivity issues experienced at the prior conference
- Consensus reached: hold an in-person gathering at the conference as a social and recognition event, not a formal decision-making meeting
- Formal decisions will continue to be made at online meetings where all members can participate equally
- Laura Parson and Lauren Eastwood volunteered to organize an informal social gathering (dinner or similar) at the conference in New York

7. Online Poster Conference

- Date: March 27, 2026, 2:00–4:00 PM EST
- Features 8 posters from students and recent graduates
- No IE-specific posters, but members are encouraged to attend and support emerging scholars
- Information available online through SSSP

8. SSSP and Divisions Update

Push to Combine Divisions

SSSP is facing significant financial pressures, largely driven by conference costs. The board and the Council of Division Chairs have been working toward consolidating divisions to reduce the number of conference sessions and the overall size of the annual meeting. Clay Michael Awsumb explained:

- The number of sessions a division can submit for the program is determined by the number of divisions.
- Fewer divisions = smaller meeting = reduced costs.
- This approach has been contentious among division chairs.
- Several divisions have already merged; IE's most natural partner would likely be a research-focused division, though that is not a perfect fit

IE is not part of the problem: the division consistently has strong session attendance and high proposal volume. The chair expressed confidence that, especially with conference attendance expected to be strong this year, the division will remain well above the sustainability threshold.

Upcoming Financial Changes

Budget restructuring that would reduce smaller divisions' allocations is still in the proposal phase and would not take effect until at least 2027.

9. Journal of Institutional Ethnography (JIE)

Laura Parson provided an update on the new Journal of Institutional Ethnography:

- Submissions are open on an ongoing basis - the February 28 date was a priority deadline for consideration in the inaugural issue, not a final submission cutoff
- The inaugural issue is slated for publication in September 2026
- The journal uses a developmental review process: all submissions within the scope of IE receive feedback, regardless of publication outcome
- The editorial board is actively recruiting members, with particular interest in graduate students and new professionals (no prior experience required; training provided)
- To submit or join the editorial board, contact Laura Parson or Frederica (submission link shared in chat during the meeting)

10. Open Topics

Book on Writing an IE Dissertation

Emily Johnson and Laura Parson are co-authoring a book to guide students and advisors through the IE dissertation process. They are seeking short vignettes from members, including:

- Stories of what would have been helpful when writing an IE dissertation
- Recommendations for advisors supporting IE dissertation students

Emily will send the call for submissions to Hans-Peter for distribution via the LinkedIn page and the membership email list. Suzan also requested a copy for distribution through the ISA mentoring network.

Dorothy Smith 100th Birthday Commemoration

Paul Luken raised the upcoming milestone of Dorothy Smith's 100th birthday on July 6, 2026, and suggested the division mark the occasion in some way. Laura Parson expressed strong interest in coordinating a celebration, envisioning a multimedia event incorporating arts and poetry. Gina Petonito offered to include a tribute in the upcoming newsletter. Hans-Peter offered to assist with distribution once plans take shape.

Meeting Frequency

The group discussed whether to increase from two to three online division meetings per year. The June meeting, which would take place after the Canadian Sociological Association (CSA) conference, was seen as particularly valuable to receive updates from the IE track at CSA, which is being organized for the first time. Paul Luken also noted the online portion of the CSA meeting is free to attend with registration.

- CSA Virtual Section: June 2- 4, 2026
- CSA In-Person Section: June 10- 13, 2026

Decision: The division will hold three online meetings per year. Hans-Peter will schedule a June meeting (after the CSA in-person dates) and will clearly list all time zones in the invitation.

Action Items

- **Hans-Peter de Ruiter:** Send a standalone, urgent call for newsletter editor to the full membership, clearly stating the newsletter will cease if no one volunteers
- **Gina Petonito:** Follow up with member who expressed interest in newsletter editorship via direct message
- **Hans-Peter de Ruiter:** Contact Paul Luken and Suzan to formalize the Dorothy Smith Activist Award selection process for 2027
- **Helen Hudson / Awards Committee:** Finalize Student Paper Award decision and notify winner by April 1, 2026
- **Emily Johnson:** Send vignette call for IE dissertation book to Hans-Peter for distribution
- **Suzan Vaughan:** Distribute vignette call through the ISA mentoring network
- **Laura Parson & Paul Luken:** Coordinate planning for Dorothy Smith 100th birthday commemoration (July 6, 2026)
- **Hans-Peter de Ruiter:** Schedule June online division meeting (after CSA in-person dates); include all time zones in the invitation
- **Laura Parson & Lauren Eastwood:** Organize informal social gathering for IE members at SSSP conference in New York
- **All members:** Suggest nominees for Dorothy Smith Activist Award to Hans-Peter
- **All members:** Encourage colleagues to renew SSSP membership to keep IE division above the 50-member threshold