

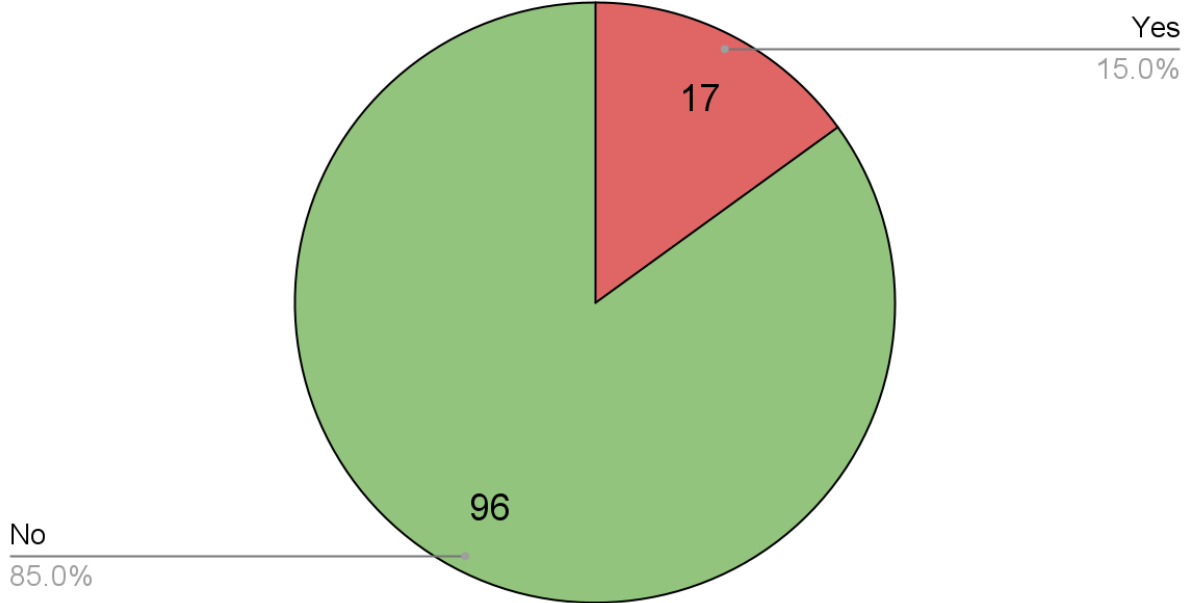
SSSP Anti-Harassment Committee Climate Survey Results

The anti-harassment committee would like to thank the Administrative Office for their assistance with preparing and disseminating this survey, and the SSSP members who took the time to share their perspectives and experiences. We look forward to using this feedback and to continue to work together to ensure that the SSSP is an inclusive, engaging, welcoming and respectful space for all.

Quantitative Findings

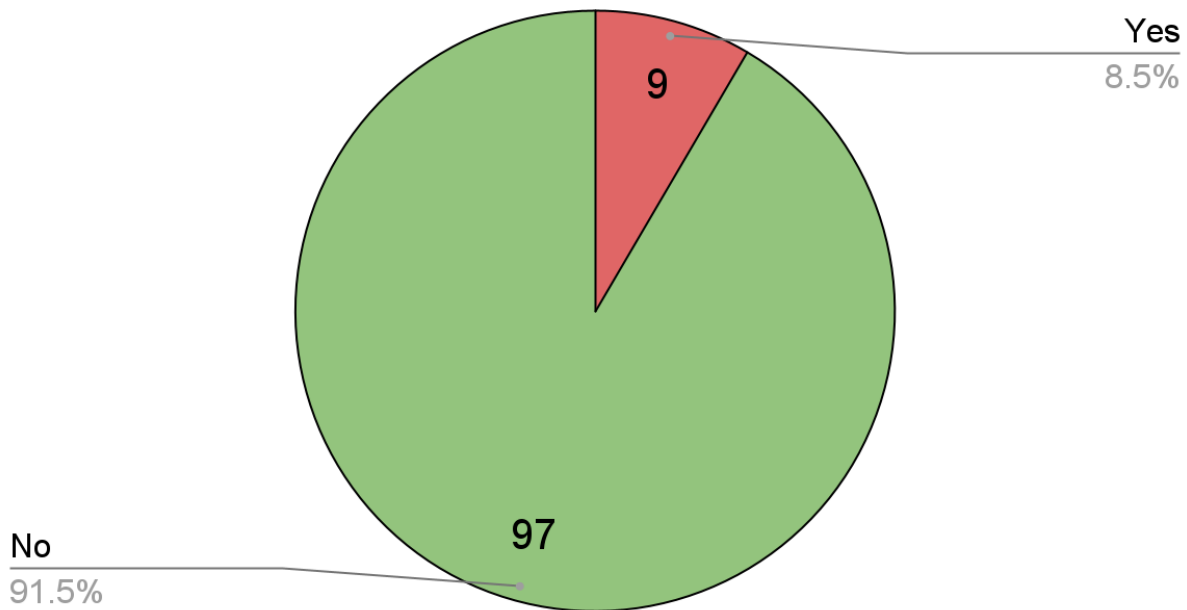
In this section, we provide a broad overview of the primary quantitative findings.

Q: Have you ever felt unwelcome or disrespected - or known of someone else who felt this way - at a SSSP-sponsored event (e.g. conference event, meeting, etc.)?



Of the 113 responses, 96 (84.96%) selected “No”, while 17 (15.04%) selected “Yes”.

Q: Have you experienced any form of harassment as described in the policy or known of someone who experienced harassment at a SSSP-sponsored event?



Of the 106 responses, 97 (91.51%) selected “No”, while 9 (8.49%) selected “Yes”.

Qualitative Findings

Participants shared their experiences related to themselves or another individual feeling unwelcome or disrespected at a SSSP-sponsored event. Several participants expressed their positive experiences with the SSSP.

“ At every event that I have attended at SSSP over the years, everyone has been welcoming and inclusive. I think the organization does a great job.

“ I have always felt welcome and included...by SSSP leadership.

Other responses indicated a range of experiences from first-hand to second-hand, and involving a variety of areas of discrimination, including age, race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, etc. Some described blatant discrimination from senior individuals, while others detailed an environment that fostered discrimination that was either intentional or a byproduct of oversight.

“ Blatant class discrimination, cliques that exclude, American centric yet speaks to welcoming international audience.

Another respondent described how two colleagues at ASA/ SSSP made homophobic and vulgar “jokes”.

“ I’d like to keep this as vague and anonymous as possible because this isn’t my story to tell, but in certain divisions there are particular more senior scholars who can be quite critical of people’s projects, including students and new scholars. They’ll publicly make comments during sessions that are demeaning and harassing unless/until another more established scholar intervenes. I know people, especially early career academics and students, afraid to join certain sessions and certain divisions because of these incidents. I think I’ve heard though that it’s been better in recent years but I wouldn’t be able to say definitively.

Participants were asked “What can the SSSP do to prevent and respond to harassment and ensure that all of our members feel welcome, safe, and engaged in our organization?”. Suggestions ranged from better listening and inclusivity, increased education of SSSP policies, promoting available support systems and resources, creating oversight committees, increased victim support, promoting swift and serious actions for harassers, creating additional social gatherings where individuals can support one another, and being more considerate of diverse abilities when planning events.

Better Listening and Inclusivity & Increased Education of SSSP Policies

“ Listen carefully to anyone who voices those concerns. **Continue to educate** the SSSP membership about our expectations of members in regards to offering a welcoming, safe and professional environment.

“ **Publicize the anti-harassment policy**, but don't overdo it. Don't want people to think this is a particularly [acute] issue for SSSP.

“ **Awareness creation** on the policy for all members Repeat this survey once a year. Prompt reply all correspondence from members.

“ Just what you ARE doing--get it "out there", keeping talking about it, **raise consciousness**.

“ Current policy documents appear to be comprehensive in detail and reasonably thorough as to both procedures and remedies. Good job!

“ **Make people aware** of how their words and behaviors can make others feel uncomfortable or unwelcomed. People in leadership positions especially can have this effect.

“ Be **critically inclusive** without exceptions.

- “ Call people out publicly and do not allow them to serve in any leadership role or have any decision making authority. **Zero tolerance.**
- “ **Listen** to those who report issues and **act immediately.**
- “ Remind people we are there to be professionals. Professionals treat others with dignity because they believe they possess some specialized set of skills that help improve the world around us. Engaging in behavior that is harassment violates our professional code of ethics.
- “ **Clarity about the expectations,** and norms of professional behavior.
- “ Continue to remind participants of the policies and **hold people accountable** who violate those policies.

Expand available support systems and resources and increase victim support

- “ Promote available **support systems and resources** for those who do experience harassment, making members aware that harassment is not something that will be tolerated.
- “ An **online reporting form/link** on the SSSP website would be a great way for folks to anonymously report any issues. **Workshops** at the conference and/or **webinars** on ways to create respectful and inclusive environments at the conference would also be helpful.
- “ It helps to have someone to whom people can **report issues.** In most settings, when harassment occurs, it is up to the person who has experienced the harassment to figure out where to go or whom to see. **Identifying a contact point** will help at the outset.
- “ Encourage members to **report issues** during the conference.
- “ Have a **larger Welcome ceremony** at the beginning of the conference.

Committee’s Response:

The survey responses focused on several major topics that have been at the forefront of the committee’s work for the past few years: awareness and education regarding harassment and climate, reporting options, and holding those who violate the policy accountable. Many of the recommendations shared by survey participants are already in place, so we share those below. We also identify additional steps the committee plans to take.

Awareness/Education/Support

The committee is exploring ways to increase awareness and visibility of our policy, the committee, and the work we are doing, both at in-person conferences and beyond. We are considering a workshop or panel discussion at our next meeting, as well as ways of ensuring committee members' presence and availability at all major events. We are identifying additional resources to share with members who have experienced harassment. We also plan to continue to conduct this survey on an annual basis as recommended by some respondents.

Reporting

There are currently a number of reporting options available, both during conferences (with contact information) and outside of conferences, to those experiencing policy violations as described in the current policy. We are also working to create anonymous reporting options - both for individual violations and for general climate concerns - via the website. More information to come.

Accountability

This is perhaps the most challenging aspect of anti-harassment work and the committee has been engaged in ongoing discussions to continue to improve our policies, practices and procedures. The balance between zero tolerance for harassment and due process for those accused of violating the policy is often difficult to achieve.

We have prepared for ways to address incidents that occur at meetings by expelling violators from the event. We have also worked to identify an external investigator and ombudsperson to assist with responding to formal reports where more extensive sanctions are sought and appropriate.

As a small nonprofit organization, we do not have the resources to investigate formal reports of harassment occurring outside of meetings, but we rely on members' places of employment with Title IX offices and their own resources. We are prepared to act on relevant findings from these investigations as they implicate SSSP members, such as revoking membership or leadership positions.

We continue to meet with other sociology associations' committees doing similar work, and to seek additional resources to help identify best practices. We also want to focus on culture change as a way of preventing harassment, rather than focus exclusively on punitive measures. We agree with respondents who suggested that SSSP leaders, especially, should be expected to set and uphold these expectations.

Accessibility

One respondent mentioned the need to consider accessibility when choosing conference hotels. This has long been a practice of the SSSP. Héctor Delgado offers the following: "Unfortunately, sometimes, for a variety of reasons (e.g., cost), we've had to go with a hotel where accessibility

was not what we would have liked.” Similarly, a respondent suggested that we have “all-gender” bathrooms at conferences, another practice that has been in place for many years. We can, and should, do a better job of informing folks of what we do.

STAY INVOLVED!

We are pleased that 23 respondents indicated that they were willing to participate in a listening session, but only two emailed Sarah Jane Brubaker, Anti-Harassment Committee Chair, to share their contact information. If you are interested in participating or would like to provide additional feedback to the committee, please email Sarah Jane at sbrubaker@vcu.edu.