

## 2023 MEETING MINUTES

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING I SOUTHERN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY, MYRTLE BEACH, SC WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 2023, 2:00PM – 6:00PM

**Present:** Earl Wright II, Stephanie Bohon, Gayle Kaufman, Irene Brown, Marni Brown, Beth Rushing, Rhiannon Leebrick, Dave Brunnsma, Kendra Jason

**Absent:** Margaret Hagerman, Tiffany Taylor, Megan Underhill, Ali Sewell, Juan Bustamante

Meeting called to order at 2:05 PM.

Quorum reached at 2:20 with the arrival of Kendra Jason.

#### **WELCOME BY PRESIDENT EARL WRIGHT II**

President Wright II thanked the Executive Committee for their support and commitment to SSS. He highlighted two issues that need to be addressed at this year's meeting: (1) SSS's COVID policy for the 2024 meeting in New Orleans and (2) creating an Anti-Harassment Committee.

#### ***Report of Interim Votes during 2022-2023 year by Recording Secretary Rhiannon Leebrick***

In 2022-2023, we voted to make an exception to our bylaws (Article III, Section 4) to fill the ballot for the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee given the impact of COVID on membership and its impact on eligibilities. We also voted on the Executive Officer position advertisement, we voted on the new Executive Officer, and we voted on faculty and student honors. In addition, we approved the minutes from SSS 2022 in Birmingham, AL and the midyear meeting minutes from October 2022.

#### ***New Executive Officer and Assistant Executive Officer Announcement by Executive Officer David Brunnsma***

The new Executive Officer will be Cameron Lippard (Appalachian State University), who will officially begin in January 2025. Over the next year and a half, he will shadow David Brunnsma and be cc'd on all emails. Given his experience with SSS, the hope is that Cameron will have input about revising procedures during his time shadowing. David predicts Cameron will do a wonderful job as the next EO. Cameron will meet with the EC later in the week. Also, welcome to Elizabeth Roberts, who will replace Lyla Byers as the new Assistant Executive Officer at the end of summer 2023. Exciting changes.

#### **EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT (DAVID BRUNNSMA)**

Dave Brunnsma reminds EC that SSS's fiscal year runs from January 1 through December 31. Dave has moved all the bookkeeping now to QuickBooks Online, which will be much more transferable to the next Executive Officer. In FY2022 operating revenues of \$114782 exceeded SSS operating expenses of \$110866, leaving SSS with \$3918. We were in Birmingham for SSS

2022 - our first in-person meeting following a 2020 cancellation and a 2021 virtual conference, both due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Though our revenues and expenses are still down overall from pre-pandemic levels (-42% registrations and -32% memberships, using SSS 2019 in Buckhead as a benchmark) the budget that the Finance Committee proposed, and the Executive Committee approved for 2022 was a very cautious and reasonable one. Given the uncertainties and changes that accompanied 2022, we should be pleased that we were able to end the fiscal year positively.

Dave walks us through 2022. The primary story of 2022 was our membership and leadership figuring out what it means to be back in-person at our wonderful annual meeting. Both our memberships and our registrations are slowly moving upward as most our members still face overwhelming workloads, uncertain budget scenarios at their institutions, and varying political contexts in their states, all combining to continue to create questions about how all of this may impact the short-term future for SSS membership and annual meeting registrations. It is unknown, but we can and will work to prepare for it all. Dave expresses excitement about SSS 2023 as another opportunity to collectively build back our beloved organization in strength. The Society maintains three primary accounts: 1) an endowment/investment fund, 2) a reserve account, and 3) a regular cash account. At the end of FY2022 our entire asset profile, the balance of *all of our accounts* was \$298,692. As of December 31, 2022, our holding in the primary investment account was worth \$221,513 compared to \$293,016 in 2021. The Himes fund was at \$20,980 at the end of December of 2022. As of December 31, 2022, the total balance of cash in our money market account at Edward Jones was \$13,153. Our constitution requires maintaining a reserve fund equal to 33% of our operating budget. During FYE 2022 that minimum, using our EC-approved budgeted/expected income of \$119,317, was \$39,375. As of December 31, 2022, adding our investment fund (\$221,513) and our money market fund (\$13,153) together gives us a significant pool of reserves – some 595%. And, finally, we have our checking account at Regions Bank. As of December 31, 2021, the balance of that account was \$43,046.

### ***Membership and Meeting Registration Numbers***

Dave discusses that our membership numbers have been increasing steadily since the early 2010s as have our registrants at the annual meeting – up to 2018 for sure. These likely were plateauing at this time and then the pandemic hit. As the books were closed on the 2022 fiscal year, our membership consisted of 826 members of whom 22 were Sustaining Members, 353 Regular Members, 305 Student Members, 19 Emeriti Members (8 with *Social Currents*), and 62 Unemployed/Contingent Members. We collected \$41,798 in membership dues, net of credit card fees. We had 19 Departmental Members: 5 PhD-Granting, 6 MA-Granting, and 8 BA-granting departments of sociology. We had a total of 627 registrants for SSS 2022 with 286 Regular registrants, 257 Student registrants, 50 Contingent/Unemployed/NonTT registrants, 2 Nonmember registrants, and 7 Emeriti registrants. SSS 2023's Myrtle Beach site is a first for SSS. We will be back in NOLA (but at the Sheraton) in 2024, Charlotte, NC in 2025, Jacksonville, FL (a rescheduled contract due to COVID) in 2026 and NOLA (Convention Center again) in 2027. After offering the report, Dave Brunsma thanked the Executive Committee, Assistant Executive Officer Lyla Byers, Program Co-Chairs, Anita Bledsoe-Gardner and DeMond Miller, President

Earl Wright II, and Vice President Marni Brown, among others, including, but not limited to President Elect Gayle Kaufman, Vice President Elect Irene Brown, Virginia Tech Department Chair Jennifer Johnson, co-editors of *Social Currents* Jennifer Augustine and Amanda Koontz, and editor of *The Southern Sociologist*, Nadya Vera. He also shared that he is deeply grateful for our SSS Members “for their constant energies, ideas, and their important scholarship” and is “honored to serve SSS as Executive Officer.”

**Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items on EO Report:**

- Why were there more people registered in 2021, but less revenue generated, see Table 3?
  - Online registration was less expensive.
- Was there a negative reaction to running out of rooms in Myrtle Beach?
  - Does not appear so.
- Should we reconsider departmental memberships?
  - Maybe keep this on the backburner.
- Recommendation that Program Co-chairs have experience with SSS.
- Time does not seem right to raise dues.
- **Action Item: Must address COVID policy for 2024. Added to Friday’s agenda.**

**ASSISTANT EO/WEBMASTER’S REPORT (LYLA BYERS)**

Lyla Byers reports that the role of Assistant Executive Officer (AEO) will transition to Elizabeth Roberts at the end of summer 2023. During this transition process, they will work to create a better file sharing system, especially related to thinking through where to store shared information and control permissions as people transition in and out of roles. The goal is to centralize and standardize these processes so that SSS’s organizational memory/files can be in an easily accessible place. They are also working to create an AEO handbook and a new JEDI tab on the website. Reminds EC members to share photos for the website. Request for SSS to purchase adapters for the projectors. Elizabeth gives updates on the SSS mobile app for the conference and is working to make sure everything is live and up to date and reports that she appreciates any feedback from EC. The data for the annual conference will stay on the app until July 1, 2023. Earl Wright II suggests that we move the Anti-Harassment policy to an easy to find place on the SSS website as soon as possible.

**Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items on AEO Report:**

- **Action item: Create AEO Handbook**
- **Action item: Add JEDI Tab on website**
- **Action item: Move Anti-Harassment Policy to easy to find place on SSS Website**
- **Action item: Summer work—compile data into one place.**
- Request for adapters for SSS Meetings

**PROGRAM COMMITTEE (DEMOND MILLER, ANITA BLEDSOE-GARDNER)**

Program Co-chairs DeMond Miller and Anita Bledsoe-Gardner thanked Dave, Lyla, and Earl for their help this year. They report that the Program Committee organized 190 sessions and that it

was a very full program, each day was full, including Saturday, although often the last day is lighter. Faced some challenges in meeting all the time slots, overbooking occasionally. Programs were online, but some were printed for the visually impaired and also some to keep in each presentation room and at the registration desk. Suggested that SSS adopt a formal way of notating one's presentation when submitted online to streamline what folks enter into the submission portal and make it easier on the Program Committee, perhaps use ASA formatting. Sessions submitted with misspellings or incorrect information were blamed on Program Chairs, which was frustrating. Program Chairs shared that they had stepped away from SSS years ago because it did not feel like an inclusive space. This year, some members sent nasty emails to them that gave them both pause about continuing to be involved in SSS. That being said, they shared that these were a few folks, not representative of all SSS members. Others chimed in that unfortunately this has been the experience of Program Co-chairs in years past as well and this behavior is inexcusable from SSS members. Discussed anti-harassment policy as it relates to the position of Program Chair (s). Going forward make sure Program Chairs connect to former chairs to share pertinent information and advice and also work closely with the Executive Officer. Overall, a very successful program and the Executive Committee was grateful to the Program Chairs, DeMond Miller and Anita Bledsoe-Gardner, for their dedication and hard work putting together a robust program.

***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items on Program Chairs Report:***

- Recommendation to adopt standardized way to notate all presentation submissions.
- Recommendation for Program Co-chairs to work closely with former Program Co-chairs and EO.
- Were DeMond and Anita's experiences typical?
  - EC says that unfortunately yes, other chairs have faced similar behavior from a handful of members.
- **Action Item: suggestion to clarify anti-harassment policy so that future Program Co-chairs do not face the same harassment from privileged/hateful/rude members.**

**NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE (MARNI BROWN)**

Marni Brown reported that in October of 2022, the nominations committee completed their tasks of soliciting and recommending candidates for the various positions that need to be filled. They submitted the list of candidates and all other information required for SSS to run its annual election after the annual meeting in April 2023. They believe that the list of candidates was diverse and extensive for this year, which demonstrates this committee's dedication to diversity and inclusion. However, they still feel more could be done to solicit nominations from various colleges and universities across the American South.

They continued last year's committee work by building a list of potential candidates moving forward and a list of those SSS members who have served in various roles over the last twenty years. This list helped reduce problems of over-recruiting SSS members who have already

served in multiple capacities and moved some other SSS members into new roles that they had previously expressed some interest in serving. It has been a challenging few years because COVID changed membership and therefore finding folks to serve on committees whose membership may have lapsed posed a challenge.

***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items on Nominations Committee Report:***

- How best to avoid nepotism and also find nominees willing to serve who also have experience with SSS?
- How to get all committee members to participate?
- EC agreed some years are more challenging than others and this has happened before on other committees.

-

**SSS COMMITTEE ON HONORS (JODY CLAY WARNER)**

Jody Clay Warner stuck in traffic. EO Dave Brunnsma reports.

From Jody: the work of the Committee on Honors began in October with email introductions and initial planning. The deadline for faculty award nominations was December 1. The deadline for the Odum paper awards was December 31. The SSS Executive Office distributed the call for awards through the SSS listserv, on social media, and the SSS newsletter. As has been the case in the recent past, nomination materials were sent directly to the Executive Office for verification of eligibility. After receiving verification of eligibility, the committee chair recorded nominations on google docs and created Dropbox folders for the nomination materials. The committee chair distributed links to the google docs and Dropbox folders to committee members.

The committee chair submitted the names of the selected recipients to the SSS Executive Committee for their approval. All selected recipients were approved. The committee chair then notified the recipients to verify their acceptance of the award and to determine how they would like their name to appear on the award plaque. The committee chair sent this information to the Executive Officer David Brunnsma, who is responsible for ordering the award plaques. The committee chair prepared slides for the award ceremony, which will be sent to Marni Brown, who, as SSS Vice President, is the Convocation master of ceremonies.

***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for Committee on Honors:***

- Recommendation of being more conscientious about advertising awards. Suggestion that it cannot just be an email blast, but there need to be many points of communication.
- Suggestion to reach out to undergrad departments, especially at smaller colleges for Odum award.

**SITE SELECTION COMMITTEE (STEPHANIE BOHON)**

***Room Negotiations***

The Site Selection Committee has worked on room negotiations for New Orleans. Given that we still have some time to decide, and because we do not know what the pickup will be in Myrtle Beach, Site Selection has agreed to wait until after the 2023 meeting to make any reductions to the New Orleans contract. SSS must make any reductions in room nights for the New Orleans meeting before May 2.

### ***Daily Room Cleaning***

Daily room cleaning. Members of the Executive Committee were contacted by Unite Here! over the past several months to ask for our help in pushing back against a hotel industry move to do away with daily room cleaning, which would allow them to cut hotel workers' hours and jobs. SSS Executive Officer and Site Selection Committee member Dave Brunsmas wrote to the Myrtle Beach Sheraton to ask about any such moves. In an email dated January 14, 2023, Senior Sales Manager Jessica Smith wrote: *"...These are all good questions. Marriott as a brand standard has not moved back to daily housekeeping services, so we are still following that standard. However, our front desk agents will make guests aware at check-in and offer optional daily services if they would like to have them. They just ask for a two-hour window of time that they would prefer service so we can schedule accordingly. Although our industry is still facing labor shortages, our property has business volumes back to pre-COVID which has warranted for us to get back to pre-COVID staffing levels..."* At Myrtle Beach for SSS 2023, the hotel reported that each room is to be cleaned each day.

### ***All Gender Bathrooms***

Conversation among EC members about all gender bathrooms in Myrtle Beach. Sheraton Myrtle Beach simply changed the signage (it did not actually cover the original signs) and there are no single bathrooms.

### ***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for Site Selection Committee:***

- **Action item: SSS must make any reductions in room nights for the New Orleans meeting before May 2, 2023.**
- **Action item: regarding gender neutral bathrooms, consider making sure it is a facility change in the future, not just signage.**
- EC wanted to know how next year's room rates compare?
  - New Orleans is on the higher side, \$239/night, and it is a hotel that SSS has not worked with before.
- Idea for JEDI to create a statement that describes what gender-neutral bathrooms mean to SSS, so that SSS members can know what to expect.
- Earl Wright II steps into this role (Chair of Site Selection Committee) for 2023-2024.

### **COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONS (STEPHANIE TEIXEIRA POIT)**

Stephanie Teixeira-Poit was appointed to the Committee Chair role on October 11, 2022, after the previous chair resigned due to state travel restrictions. She reports that she immediately convened the committee, and they began planning activities. The Committee on Professions

organized four sessions for the upcoming SSS meeting in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. They attempted to identify themes for sessions as outlined in our committee's charge. They organized the following sessions: (1) Professional Mentorship and CV Review (workshop); (2) The Future of Academic Freedom in the Current Political Landscape (panel); (3) Strategies for Supporting Research Identity Development among Graduate Students (panel); (4) Demystifying the Tenure and Promotion Process (panel). EC applauds the Committee on Professions for their work this year.

***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for Committee on Professions:***

- How did you all get people to participate?
  - Sent email with survey, used Qualtrics, came together easily.
- Have you all thought about grants for the future? Perhaps even a panel seeking funding?
  - Good idea will pass this on to next year's chair.
- Suggestion to partner with the Committee on Sociology in Small and Community Colleges. Also, include regional schools, maybe think about interdisciplinary funding. Potentially, consider foundation grants (NSF, NIH) or contracts with states.
- Earl said one goal this year was to make the work of sociologists at HBCUs be seen and it's been great to see so many panels with HBCUs represented, especially AT+T. This endeavor began with former SSS President Leslie Hossfeld, President Wright II wants to commend this committee for bringing these "new old voices to the table."

**COMMITTEE ON SOCIOLOGICAL PRACTICE (MAMADI CORRA)**

Mamadi Corra reported that this committee spent most of the year coming up with sessions based on the call of President Earl Wright II at the 2022 conference in Birmingham. This committee wanted to plan sessions that related directly or tangentially to the meeting theme. Following this charge, and in line with the committee's mission, the SSS Committee on Sociological Practice spent a good bit of fall in communications on session topics to propose for the 2023 SSS meetings in Myrtle Beach, SC. The committee settled on three topics: (1) Policy in a Social Context; (2) Social Activism in the South: From the Du Boisian Scholar-Activist Model to Contemporary Praxes; (3) Public Sociology: Exploring Alternative Pathways to being a Sociologist.

***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for Committee on Sociological Practice:***

- EC thanks the Committee on Professions, especially for their focus on inclusivity.
- **Action Item: SSS needs to continue to think more about inclusivity, especially as it relates to accessibility. See recommendation below.**
- Recommend developing a template for power-points for all SSS presenters that is ADA compliant. This would also help with professional development for members, especially graduate students. Also recommended basic branding and putting it on our website.

- Who is responsible for this? JEDI? This was discussed last year. It needs to be done this year. Can we borrow from ASA Footnotes?

### **COMMITTEE ON SOCIOLOGY IN COMMUNITY AND SMALL COLLEGES (CSSCC) (AMY SORENSON)**

Amy Sorenson reports that throughout the 2022-23 academic year, this committee (CSSCC) met virtually six times with the intention to meet at least once more prior to the annual meeting. They have also planned a face-to-face meeting during SSS-Myrtle Beach. This year they have focused their attention and efforts on two big projects in addition to the development of sessions for the annual meeting.

The first project was to explore how a regional professional organization like SSS can best attract, maintain participation and meet the needs of faculty from small and community colleges. This mixed methods study consists of a survey that will be sent out to SSS membership and a proposed focus group at the annual meeting in Myrtle Beach. The CSSCC is currently waiting for IRB approval. They designed this study to offer insight to EC on these issues and also to provide a possible publication avenue for committee members. Results will be shared with EC after analysis is completed (likely in the following academic year).

The second project was to explore issues with the Lectureship Award and what changes might make it more efficient and beneficial to small and community colleges. Amy took the lead on this project and set up conversations with previous winners of the award and members of this committee. To get a fuller understanding of the issues with this award, a few items will be included in the survey to be sent out to members from small and community colleges. The final report was sent to the EC at the beginning of the Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach.

This year this committee is also sponsoring three panel sessions: (1) Scholar-Activism in Small & Community Colleges in the South A (Panel); (2) Scholar-Activism in Small & Community Colleges B (Conversation); (3) Research Session, Description: How SSS (and other regional professional organizations) best support sociologists at small and community colleges.

Other issues: Based on the last annual report, this committee remains concerned about how to maintain the wonderful progress that we have made in the last two years as a committee. From the last annual report: *"The learning curve for navigating the committee structure and processes is challenging and time-consuming. Finding ways to streamline the process with sufficient information up front is desirable. This is something we will be trying to take on after the meeting this year, in the context of this committee. But the committee would appreciate any ideas EC may have for supporting our desire to be more engaged with other committees and the organization at large would be greatly appreciated."*

#### **Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for the CSSCC:**

- **Action item: One suggestion (request) that this committee has is that EC consider reformulating the process through which chairs of committees are**



chosen, and institutional memory of committees are protected. Currently, the President is charged with appointing a Chair for particular committees within the structure.

- This committee would like to suggest that, perhaps within the annual report process, committees make recommendations to EC (and thus, the President) on who might be willing to chair the committee when a chair rotates off. Given the process, committees do not know who the new chair might be and therefore do not necessarily have a plan in place for preparing to be chair (including practices, projects, and easy access to documents).
- This committee would like to suggest that, if we were to institute the previous suggestion, committees be charged with putting together a continuation plan each year. This, too, could simply be made a part of the mid-year and year-end reporting process. This could be streamlined fairly easily with a checklist of things that committees WILL plan and at the end of the year what that plan is.
- The CSSCC has had these conversations and Amy Sorensen (chair) plans to continue working with the committee after the annual meeting to get a new Chair started, ensure that they have access to all of our documents and meeting notes, and that there is a relatively smooth transition. While we realize the process has not changed at this time, we would like to suggest for our own committee that Jenna Lamphere be appointed as Chair for 23-24. She is interested in working closely with newer members of the committee to prepare someone to take over as chair when she rotates off.
- Question about the Lectureship Award and how people are determined?
  - This award might be challenging for some folks to apply to if their colleges do not offer sociology as a major or even as a minor? Noted that it is difficult for some to apply to. This committee believes that people at small and community colleges are hungry for the opportunity, wants to figure out how to make it more accessible for everyone to apply.
  - Other ideas:
    - make it clear what the award is, potentially combine different institutions so that very small departments (with or without majors) can share?
    - Mention of database of small and community colleges in the south
    - Move decisions for both site/school and lecturer to CSSCC
- What are the next steps for learning more about helping folks from small and community colleges participate more in SSS?
  - Working to get IRB approval, sent report to EC, thinking of this work as the potential for a publishing opportunity. Maybe focus groups/survey at registration table?

### **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE (JOANNA HUNTER)**

Joanna Hunter reports that membership this year is steady. The Membership Committee met once virtually in the last year and has done other business via email to plan for the annual meeting and goals for increasing and enhancing membership in the organization. This committee is particularly interested in capturing graduate students and emerging scholars who may be attending their first conference. To that end, they will be staffing a table at the welcome reception on Wednesday evening following the EC Meeting. On the table they will have QR codes available for members to scan that will give them access to the bylaws of the organization and will point them toward a form where they can indicate their interest in volunteering for a committee or committees. The hope is that this will enhance members' sense of belonging and will encourage them to volunteer to serve on a committee for the Society.

#### ***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for Membership Committee:***

- At the conclusion of the annual meeting, the chair of this committee will provide information about those wanting to volunteer to the Executive Committee for their follow-up.
- Gayle thanked this committee as this information was very helpful for nominations.
- **Action item: Two members of the Membership Committee, including the chair, are reaching the end of their term in 2023 and will need to be replaced. An election for the new chair is in process and will be finalized at the annual meeting.**

### **COMMITTEE ON RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES (CREM) (DERRICK R. BROOMS)**

Derrick Brooms reports that CREM is contributing to the Welcome Reception by having a table representing CREM in collaboration with the JEDI Committee. They will provide information regarding CREM and the collective work being done by these two committees within SSS. Derrick said next year they want to collaborate more with other committees because many of the ideas they had for panels, other committees also proposed. They especially want to work closely with JEDI.

CREM also has a sponsored panel this year titled, "Strategies for Pursuing Academic Publishing."

Finally, CREM was able to award a maximum of five travel scholarships. The invitation for CREM Travel Scholarships was shared with the membership and the deadline was Friday, March 17. Derrick reported that next year they plan to advertise earlier.

#### ***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for CREM:***

- How might JEDI and CREM spearhead opportunities together like a social event? Perhaps a virtual social gathering a month out from the annual meeting with breakout groups for graduate students and faculty? A way to build community.
- Maybe create some standardized logos for committees so on the program it's clear, basically branding logos for committees?
- **Action item: Virtual workshops/pop-ups throughout the year to keep SSS name alive during the year.**
- **EC agrees this is a great idea.**

### **COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF STUDENTS (CO-CHAIRS KIERRA TONEY AND ANTHONY STONE)**

Co-chairs Kierra Toney and Anthony Stone report that this committee did not do a lot this past year, but they have a lot of ideas going forward and need the support of the EC. One issue was that this committee had a faculty co-chair, but that the decision was made for it to be entirely student led, but that there had not been a lot of clarity on what this meant. EC was very concerned that this committee did not feel supported and wants to make sure this doesn't happen again.

Report that the STARTS program is a great place to bring in students interested in being involved in SSS.

This committee would like to have a mentorship program, virtual student work groups for networking and accountability, one or two focused panels/sessions each year geared towards professional training. They need more buy-in from students.

#### ***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for the Committee on the Status of Students:***

- This committee would like to have a mentorship program, virtual student work groups for networking and accountability, one or two focused panels/sessions each year geared towards professional training. EC is very excited about these ideas! Wants to support this committee.
- What was it that happened this year that kept this committee from doing what it wanted to do?
  - There was a lack of clarity about this committee, the by-laws had changed so there is still an EC liaison, but no faculty co-chair, and it was during the onboarding of new recording secretary.
- **Action Item: Gayle wants to work closely with this committee moving forward to make sure they are supported. Also, wants to brainstorm with students to think about appointments to this committee.**
- Request a list of just students from Lyla so that they can reach out to this list.

### **GENDER AND SEXUALITY COMMITTEE (G&S) (NAZNEEN KHAN)**

Nazneen Khan reports that this committee is sponsoring a session titled, “‘We Will Find a Way or Make One’: Reproductive Justice in the Era of Dobbs v. Jackson.” They welcomed any paper proposals on RJ including birth justice, abortion law/policy and access, sterilization abuse and other forms of obstetric violence, obstetric racism, pregnancy/birthing mortality rates, and more. In addition to the thematic session, this committee are co-sponsoring four additional sessions: (1) Gender, Sexualities, and Religion (co-sponsored with SWS-South), (2) Gender, Sexualities, and Health (co-sponsored with SWS-South & JEDI), (3) Gender and Sexuality in Digital Spaces I, (4) Gender and Sexuality in Digital Spaces II. This committee is also excited to co-sponsor the LGBTQIA+ Mixer (with JEDI and SWS-South) on Friday night of the conference. This committee wants to make sure that this event has sustainable funding going forward and would like to host something on site.

This committee will again host a safe space located away from the main conference area at the meeting.

G&S Committee will be represented at the tabling event during the Welcome Reception

***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for the G&S Committee:***

- Issue with the mixer and wanting support/funding from SSS? What is the issue!?
  - Suggestion that they have informal event off-site.
- Maybe sign-up sheets at lunch for an off-site event?
  - At this point, EC discusses the best ways for the EC to support this committee and the LGBTQIA+ Mixer.
- Still need money to support this event!
- **Action item: Can this committee be tasked with defining how SSS defines gender neutral bathrooms?**
- **Action item: Differing opinions of safe space, what this means, tasked with thinking through this for next year, keep space but perhaps move to more private location.**
- Recommendation, the G & S Committee continues to support the initiative to offer childcare to members who attend the Annual Meeting. They are open to continued discussion about how to offer this service in future conferences.

**THE SOUTHERN SOCIOLOGIST (TSS) (NADYA VERA)**

Nadya Vera reports that this was her first year as editor of TSS. COVID led to delayed newsletters. Ideas for next year are a column on public sociology. Interviews with folks like current President Wright II have been very popular! Thinking about having an advice column for grad students (this used to be a thing).

***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for TSS:***

- **Action item: Budget request from EC for graphic designer for a new look? Maybe \$500.**
- Work with Social Currents to include abstracts.

## **JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION (JEDI) (LISETTE GARCIA)**

The Committee has organized a “Fair” during the Welcome Reception where SSS members and meeting participants can meet members of the various standing committees to learn more about the committees. A QR code which links to the descriptions of the committees will also be available at each table. The following committees volunteered to host information tables: Membership, Gender & Sexuality, CREM, Publications, Site Selection JEDI. JEDI will also display members’ books that came out during the pandemic which will subsequently be raffled off to students.

JEDI is also co-sponsoring several sessions during the annual meeting: (1) Gender, Sexualities, and Health (co-sponsored with G&S, SWS-South & JEDI), (2) Gender and Sexuality in Digital Spaces I (co-sponsored by G&S & JEDI), (3) Gender and Sexuality in Digital Spaces II.

JEDI is also co-sponsoring the Striving Towards Anti-Racist Teaching in Sociology (STARTS) second cohort (for which funding was provided by SSS) has launched and includes seventeen participants from various institutions. The four workshops have already been held and participants will gather at the annual meeting in Myrtle Beach for the “critique me” session. Members of the STARTS team will review and provide feedback on CVs, resumes, teaching statements, diversity statements, and other portfolio items. They want to create things to help keep students connected. The STARTS team is still exploring additional funding options to sustain this program in perpetuity.

### ***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items for JEDI:***

- **Action item: JEDI requests that the approved DEI statement for the association have a heading similar to “About SSS” or “Welcome to SSS” and a tab similar to *Social Currents* and adding it to “recent news” and also consider creating a JEDI page for the association.**
- **JEDI has agreed to create content for the website should we be granted a page.**
- **A tab is approved for website. Vote. All in favor.**
- **JEDI can work to provide language to be approved by EC for the webpage.**
- Two people who were elected to JEDI cannot serve full terms due to personal reasons, how does this committee replace them?
- Suggestion that people rotating off stay on. **It was agreed by EC that this is a solution.**
- Making the Fair more visible:
  - add “FAIR” to program with Welcome Reception
  - need signs and maybe some items to attract people to come to table
  - maybe basic poster about what committee does and play up successes (like Gender and Sexuality Committee got gender neutral bathrooms)

Meeting adjourned 5:56PM.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING II  
SOUTHERN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY, MYRTLE BEACH, SC  
FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 2023, 8:30AM – 10:30AM**

**Present:** Earl Wright II, Megan Underhill, Stephanie Bohon, Gayle Kaufman, Irene Brown, Marni Brown, Beth Rushing, Rhiannon Leebrick, Dave Brunnsma, Kendra Jason, Juan Bustamante

**Absent:** Margaret Hagerman, Tiffany Taylor, Ali Sewell

Called to order 8:13AM by Earl Wright II. Dave Brunnsma invites the incoming Executive Officer to say a few words.

**INCOMING EO STATEMENT (Cameron Lippard)**

Cameron Lippard, shares that he is grateful for this opportunity to be the next Executive Officer, says he has worked with many members of the EC already, notes that Dave Brunnsma has been an enormous influence in his life already and he knows he will be supported going into this role. Also, notes that the transition will be very slow—1.5 years—of shadowing because his job as department chair needs his attention until then. Will be cc'd on every email and hopefully that will help initiate him to the process. He hopes to make SSS proud. Says he is sure that there will be a long and extensive list of things to do and wants to make sure to always support students as they are the lifeblood of the organization. Thanks to the EC again for this opportunity. Says he is always available to answer questions.

**BUDGET**

EO, Dave Brunnsma, goes over budget with the EC. The basic process is that we start by estimating incomings (membership and registration) by using data from past meetings. This year's budget was particularly challenging to figure out as we bounce back from COVID. SSS membership is getting back to where it once was, and we should expect higher numbers for New Orleans in 2024. EO, Dave Brunnsma, proposes to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee works through line by line. Then the Finance Committee submits the approved budget before or at the annual meeting for EC to review. EC considers the budget on Friday of each SSS meeting.

EC approves budget. Vote. All in favor.

**STARTS**

EC discusses seeking external funding for STARTS.

- Marni— If we get external money we can definitely grow STARTS. STARTS has been approached by journals and books about writing something up. There is a session today and maybe a note could go in *Social Currents*.
- Stephanie—if we have extra money, how can we spend it? Everyone who has been mentored through STARTS has found it useful, so I think we should be all in

with STARTS. Also, it might be worth looking at the extent to which ASA locations affect our location, might be worth also looking at other societies and where they are and where we are geographically.

- Dave—maybe empower a committee to do this research? Also, think about things like bathrooms in the site selection.
- **Action item: Suggestion to create a line item in budget for STARTS. Vote. All in favor.**

### ***Contributions from Colleges/Universities***

Discussion over liberal arts institutions or smaller schools' ability to contribute to SSS if a faculty member from this institution is elected SSS president. Many schools will give between \$0-\$10,000, but there should be no expectation that this can happen. EC needs to make it clear that anyone from any institution can run and that there should be no pressure on them to have their schools or departments contribute if this is not an option for them.

### ***A/V Transport Costs***

Important to consider that location matters with A/V transportation costs. As an example, New Orleans is a much farther trip from the current location at Virginia Tech of A/V materials than to Myrtle Beach. On the trip down to New Orleans, there will need to be a night each way of hotel rooms in the budget.

### ***Questions/ Recommendations/Action Items about Budget Report:***

- **Is it time to review our current contract with Sage for Social Currents?**
- Earl—Did the finance committee consider the impact of the COVID policy on the budget? At least 10-15 people pulled out this year because of it.
- Kendra—I know there were members from HBCUs that did not come because of our COVID policy. EC discusses that some did not come because of the policy because they were not vaccinated, others because they thought the policy too lax.

Budget discussion closes.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY**

- Earl says he, Dave, and Bri Turgeon talked to several people with SSSP about forming a permanent anti-harassment committee or body that can address issues of harassment. Suggestions were to invest in an ombudsperson, have an external lawyer/retainer, make it survivor-centered, include students on this committee.
- Dave, the EC needs to make a decision and have a strategy in place. Forming a committee is one step, they can sort through the details from the conversation with SSSP and recommendations from the Anti-Harassment Task Force. They have discussed training advocates and more formal ways for reporting that can be

anonymous and confidential. Brianna Turgeon has agreed to be the point person this coming year.

- From Bri representing the Anti-Harassment Task Force: Having people with a range of identities represented on committee, trying to have a grad student on the committee, a combination of elected and appointed people, making sure the focus of the committee is more about overseeing the policy itself, rather than “investigating”—investigating is where external folks would come in.
- EC discusses potential solutions and ideas:
- Stephanie wants to make sure creating a committee isn’t just performative. Dave says whatever we do the intent needs to protect members, not the organization. Marni suggests that make sure members know anti-harassment policies before attending meetings, agree to abide by before attending. Juan suggests that maybe we also need to consider members being harassed given the political climate and how to protect them. Earl suggests that an Ethics Committee could potentially be a solution to protect SSS members or provide guidance given political attacks. Marni suggests SSS meetings offer bystander training. Beth, to keep it from being performative, give this committee a charge of action.
- Earl suggests sending this issue back to JEDI? Kendra is worried about how much gets put on JEDI, especially if we think about equity, their workload seems inequitable compared to other committees. Conversation about what to do next. EC decides on action item, see below.
- **Action item: Gayle or Earl charge EC with working with JEDI and the Anti-Harassment Taskforce to form a plan for a standing committee by the mid-term meeting in October/November 2023.**

Anti-harassment conversation closes.

#### **ARCHIVIST**

- We do not currently have an archivist. Items are stored at the University of Kentucky.
- Kendra suggests Mairead Moloney.
- **Action item: Gayle needs to think about a new archivist, hopefully someone at University of Kentucky during their term.**

Archivist discussion ends.

#### **COVID POLICY FOR 2023-2024**

- In terms of thinking about New Orleans, we really need to figure out what our COVID policy will be. This year probably 10-15 people pulled out because of our current policy. Earl shares that our existing policy likely kept more people away.
- Discussion among EC members about wearing masks at meetings, when people are not wearing masks anywhere else.



- The point was made that immunocompromised folks are taking a risk, but they also know they are taking a risk, life has become risk management. EC wants to be supportive of all members.
- CDC is no longer recommending masks and most organizations do not require vaccines. ASA policy only states that meeting attendees should follow any COVID protocols mandated by local authorities at the time of the meeting. They do strongly encourage members to wear masks and receive vaccinations. They also leave room in their policy to amend things should public health circumstances change.
- **Action item: Motion (Stephanie) to follow ASA policy for 2024 Meeting in New Orleans: Encourage members to protect themselves with vaccines and masks, but no requirements. Can change as the meeting gets closer if needed. Seconded by Juan. Vote. All in favor. Will publicize with the call for papers.**

Discussion about COVID policy concludes.

#### **REPORT FROM AMY SORENSON ON DISTINGUISHED LECTURESHIP SERIES**

- EC agrees it is a fantastic report that clearly explains how SSS can better vet potential awardees of the Distinguished Lecturer Series, determine location, and develop a more streamlined process. Also, how to communicate this award to members and to potential awardees.
- **Action item: Motion (Stephanie) for the Committee on Small and Community Colleges to select Distinguished Lecturer Awardee and site going forward. Seconded by Beth. Vote. All in favor. Approved.**
- 

Discussion on report from Amy concludes.

**BIG THANK YOU FROM EC TO KENDRA, BETH, AND MARNI FOR THEIR WORK ON EC AS THEY ROTATE OFF!**

Meeting adjourns 9:50AM.

### **BUSINESS MEETING SOUTHERN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY, MYRTLE BEACH, SC SATURDAY APRIL 1, 2023, 7:30AM – 8:30AM**

Meeting called to order at 7:33AM.

#### **WELCOME BY PRESIDENT EARL WRIGHT II**

President Earl Wright II welcomes SSS members and thanks them and the EC for a successful conference or what he humbly says to much applause is, "what I've been told is this year's meeting has been an acceptable meeting by most."

#### **RECAP OF EC MEETING I AND II**

Recording Secretary, Rhiannon Leebrick, gives a quick recap of Wednesday and Saturday's EC meetings and announces that Cameron Lippard will be the incoming Executive Officer.

### **OVERVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR**

Dave Brunsma gives an overview of SSS's fiscal year that he shared with the EC (see Executive Committee Meeting I & II Minutes). Says that SSS is financially healthy right now. Reports that the upcoming meetings are as follows: 2024 New Orleans, 2025 Charlotte, 2026 Jacksonville, 2027 New Orleans. Dave thanks Earl Wright II, Lyla Byers, Anne Patrick, and Elizabeth Roberts, Marni Brown, DeMond Miller, and Anita Bledsoe-Gardner, among others. Says he is grateful for the opportunity to serve SSS and says Cameron Lippard will be shadowing him beginning now and that he will make sure the new EO is prepared when the official transition occurs. Also shares that he looks forward to working with Gayle Kaufman and Irene Brown. That his department at Virginia Tech has been incredibly supportive as have the editorial staff of *Social Currents* and *TSS*. He also notes that the 2023 meeting has been fantastic and notes that if our duty is to provide a space for the diversity of ideas and bodies, we have succeeded thanks to the leadership of Earl, DeMond, and Anita.

### **Questions/Suggestions from SSS members during Business Meeting related to EO report:**

- What is the SSS data security policy?
  - There is some ambiguity.
- We need to have a conversation about data security (Dave).
  - Suggestion, that it might be useful to have an operations officer to fill in gaps of organizational management (Kendra).
- How do we handle people Zooming in, even though it was supposed to all be in person?
  - Suggestion, it might be useful to have more standardized communication between presidors and presenters, especially since 40% of members are students (Gayle).
  - It would be \$50-60K to have hybridized rooms, that is not within our budget (Dave).
- It would be nice to have more opportunities for the EC to interact with members throughout the conference (Marni).
- Program Co-chairs tried to welcome people, split up, make sure there was a friendly face at each event to explain things, give direction (DeMond).
- People are always willing to chip in, it's a great thing about SSS (Stephanie).
- Where will SSS be in Charlotte?
  - Sheraton (Dave).

### **PASSING OF THE GAVEL**

President Earl Wright II officially passes the gavel to President-Elect Gayle Kaufman. Applause from the audience. He also gives them a copy of Robert's Rules, a copy of the fifty-year history

of SSS, and a mirror that represents looking at “the face of Southern sociology”, where one can see a physical representation of what SSS is.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF LEADERSHIP AND THEME FOR 2024 BY PRESIDENT KAUFMAN**

New SSS President, Gayle Kaufman, thanks Earl for his leadership, thanks DeMond and Anita, thanks Dave and Rhiannon, among others. Gayle goes over program co-chairs and local arrangements co-chairs for New Orleans, 2024 and the theme of the 2024 Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

Program Co-chairs will be:

- D’Lane Compton, University of New Orleans, Program Co-Chair
- Hiromi Taniguchi, University of Louisville

Local Arrangements Co-chairs will be:

- Heather O’Connell, Louisiana State University, Local Arrangements Co-Chair
- Kevin Smiley, Louisiana State University, Local Arrangements Co-Chair

### ***Overview of the 2024 theme, Disrupting Binaries by President Kaufman***

People like to put themselves and other people into boxes. Sociology has generally supported this. How else are we going to empirically look at patterns related to race, class, gender, sexuality, and so on? However, sociology has also taught us that how we categorize and who we categorize is extremely meaningful—for findings and realities.

Empirically, there are boxes for gender. There are boxes for sexual orientation. There are boxes for race, and boxes for ethnicity, disability status, and on and on. Gender in the US has historically split people into men and women. Sexual orientation, until recently, split people into gay and straight. Race splits people into white and non-white. Disability status splits people into those with a disability and those without a disability. Along with these boxes, we see difference – one with higher status and one with lower status. But we also know that people are more complicated than this. And sometimes we feel like we don’t fit into one of the categories. How many categories should we make? Sociologists, both qualitative and quantitative (yet another binary), have led the way in establishing what we know about new identity categories and how they are measured.

There have been large increases in categories that we would have considered “other” a few years ago, and this is especially evident among younger people. Pew notes that 1.6% of adults in the US identify as trans or nonbinary, but this is 5.1% of the 18-29 age group. Likewise, Gallup data show that 4% of adults in the US identify as bisexual, and this is 15% of Gen Z members. Same with race. More and more people are checking multiple boxes for race. According to the US Census, 10.2% of the population identifies as multiracial, which is an increase of 276% since 2010.

There is potential erasure of people not neatly in the binary. Those who are bisexual are often assumed to be gay if in a same-gender relationship or straight if in a different-gender relationship. Similarly, biracial and multiracial identities are often erased as those with any combination of non-white races are often lumped in with their non-white category – being Black and white means you are Black.

All of this at a time when there are increasing attacks on people who do not fit neatly into the categories that have been constructed around gender and sexuality. The US House of Representatives just passed the “Parents Bill of Rights” (on March 24), which requires schools to tell parents whenever they have a policy to allow transgender students to use the bathroom or play on a sport team that reflects their gender, and more specifically, inform parents if their child changes their name, pronouns, or bathroom used. Meanwhile, there are hundreds of anti-LGBTQ bills at the state level across the country. In 2022, 26 bills passed. So far in 2023, 23 bills have already passed. These bills target LGBTQ and particularly trans rights in schools, health care, public accommodations, and other civil rights.

What’s going on in the south? Many of the states with multiple bills are in the south. There have been 14 bills introduced in Florida alone, with HB1421 being particularly concerning as it bans gender-affirming care for minors and more broadly bans health insurance coverage for all sorts of treatments including HRT for menopause, breast cancer, and prostate cancer. And it doesn’t stop there. As we know as sociologists, it’s all linked. So, the same organizations and policies that attack LGBTQ+ folks attack Black, Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous people.

The theme for our 2024 conference is “Disrupting Binaries.” It is an invitation to sociologists exploring binary thinking and the many ways in which we place people into opposing categories. This lends itself well to issues of gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, disability and health, aging and youth, rural and urban sociology, migration, globalization, and more. Sociologists are well positioned not only to conceptualize and conduct research on these topics, but also to offer potential policies and actions for improving the lives of people and bettering society. There is no better time than now, amongst all the challenges we face, from what we teach about gender, sexuality, and race in the classroom to the rights and very existence of trans people. Let us take up the charge to engage in sociology that dismantles biases, structures, and laws that do harm to people.

I hope to see you in New Orleans in 2024!

Applause.

Meeting adjourns 8:30AM.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING II**

**SOUTHERN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY, MYRTLE BEACH, SC  
FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 2023, 8:30AM – 10:30AM**

**Present:** Gayle Kaufman, Megan Underhill, Rhiannon Leebrick, Stephanie Bohon, Earl Wright II, Irene Brown, Dawn T. Robinson, JT Thomas, Anthony Peguero, Dave Brunnsma, Juan Bustamante, Marni Brown (sitting in while waiting for airport shuttle)

**Absent:** Ali Sewell, David Embrick

Meeting called to order at 8:41AM.

**WELCOME BY PRESIDENT KAUFMAN**

President Gayle Kaufman welcomes the EC and announces the theme, “Disrupting Binaries,” for SSS 2024 and discusses why they chose this theme. Also announces new program chairs and local arrangements co-chairs too. Also, thanks former President Earl Wright II for a very successful conference in Myrtle Beach. EC agrees and commends him for his hard work. EC discusses that the events, speakers, and panels were fantastic, including the Presidential Address and Reception, which had a great turn-out and lots of compliments on the message, the networking, and the dancing and food. EC discusses their excitement for the 2024 Meeting too and President Kaufman’s theme.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

***Program Chairs***

EC discusses duties of Program Chairs. There is a recommendation that Program Chairs need to have been engaged with SSS before committing to this role because there is the idea that this might help planning for the meeting flow smoothly. Also, the suggestion that program chairs rely on the knowledge/experience of former chairs and the EO. It is also suggested that the tenure of Program Co-Chairs be drawn out longer so that it’s a three-year commitment: a year of shadowing, a year of leading, a year of providing information to incoming chairs as a way to keep institutional memory alive from one year to the next. Also, make sure that Program Co-Chairs are familiar with the Handbook of Operations and that the onboarding process into this role is clarified to those who are selected to volunteer. The EC highlights the importance of communication between the EC and the Program Co-chairs each year and making sure that the EC, EO, President, Recording Secretary, among others, provide plenty of guidance. The EC develops two action items.

- **Action item: President and EC help facilitate a meeting of new Program Co-chairs with former co-chairs soon after the Annual Meeting so that work can begin.**
- **Action item: Gayle is planning to meet with each committee one on one over the summer to clarify and help with mission, goals, and communication.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### ***Virtual Events***

Gayle announces that they would like more virtual events this year to keep folks engaged with SSS. EC agrees this is a good idea especially since each committee has a charge and spends time brainstorming ideas. These were also suggestions brought forward by CREM and the Committee on the Status of Students. These virtual sessions could include talks, webinars, professional development opportunities, workshops, or virtual spaces to network over particular topics. Initially, the EC considers an event per month, each sponsored by one committee, but then discusses that this might be a bigger time commitment that folks have to give. Suggestion that it is perhaps only two or three events over the year. Dave will talk to Brad about what is possible with technology. It is suggested that if there is a webinar series there could be little “teasers” to advertise these talks on social media. The first step is that Gayle will put out feelers when they meet with each committee over the summer to see who is interested and what ideas folks have and then report back to the EC.

### ***Alcohol at events with faculty/students, especially at this year’s student mixer***

The concern is raised that students were under the impression that there was free alcohol at the student mixer and there is confusion amongst EC members over how this could be given that SSS does NOT provide alcohol at these events. Some students also reported they were uncomfortable interacting with a very inebriated faculty member. EO confirms that SSS does NOT provide free alcohol, under any circumstances, and only provides food for the Student Mixer. That is the SSS policy. Upon discussion, EC members recognized that there was a large bar tab opened by a faculty member that gave the impression there was free alcohol to students. EC members are concerned about this for a variety of reasons and share that it seems counter to SSS policy, although in a gray area, that it could potentially be grooming behavior, and that they are not comfortable with the message this sends to students. EC members deliberate for some time over appropriate responses and decide on two things: first, the EO and President with input from the EC will draft a letter to the faculty member who opened the bar tab requesting that this not happen again and send. Second, EC members decide that at the 2024 Annual Meeting in New Orleans they will make a concerted effort to attend events as advocates potentially with badge/sign/training as a way to support student members.

- **Action item: EO will email faculty member to remind them of SSS policy on alcohol to formally request that an open tab for students NOT happen again.**

Adjourn 9:50AM.