

Procedures for Selecting Executive Officer for SSSP

Rationale

While we are fortunate that Tom Hood continues to serve as SSSP's Executive Officer, at some point Tom will want to step down. Tom has indicated his willingness to serve through the 2009 annual meeting, but we need to have procedures in place, which can be followed when SSSP next selects an Executive Officer.

The choice of a new Executive Officer is a major decision; in most cases, it not only will involve choosing a new individual, but a new site for the Executive Office. Ideally, an Executive Officer's term would end following an annual meeting. This would be the least disruptive time for the organization to experience a transition, and it also would allow the start of the new Executive Officer's term of office to coincide with the beginning of a new academic year.

Ideally, the Board of Directors would vote to select the new Executive Officer at the annual meeting one year prior to the beginning of that person's term. We can assume that the process of announcing the opening, reviewing applications, etc. will take a full year. Therefore, SSSP needs to begin the search process at the annual meeting two years before the transition. It is important to understand the overall sequence:

Year 1: During the annual meeting, the search process will be launched.

Year 2: During the annual meeting, a candidate will be selected.

Year 3: Following the annual meeting, the new person becomes the Executive Officer.

SSSP's 2006 Operations Manual (see Section I. D.: "Selecting the Executive Office, Executive Officer, and the Administrative Officer") outlines the selection process. At the 2005 meeting of the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee, it was agreed that this plan needed to be expanded and clarified. We propose the following changes. (The text from the current Operations Manual is in regular type; proposed additions are bracketed and in italics. The version incorporates in regular text the changes already proposed for the manual.):

I. D. Selecting the Executive Office, Executive Officer, and the Administrative Officer

Every two years, commensurate with the site visit of the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee, the Board of Directors will evaluate the effectiveness and general desirability of maintaining current arrangements relative to the Executive Office, Executive Officer, and the Administrative Officer. This evaluation will take into consideration the site report from the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning

Committee and any other information the Board is able to attain. Should the Board decide a change is needed in any or all of the above office entities, or should there be a vacancy(ies) for other reasons, the following procedure will be followed.

1. In the past, it has been assumed that the Executive Office will be at the location of the Executive Officer. The selection of the Executive Officer will simultaneously involve the selection of the Executive Office” unless the Board of Directors approves an alternative plan.
2. Once it is determined that the Executive Office is to be vacated, and that a replacement is desirable, the President of the Board will solicit nominations and applications for the Executive Officer. [*Ordinarily, the decision to begin a search will occur at the annual meeting that marks the end of the organizational year--call this Year 1.*] An invitation will go out to all members and all Sociology Departments and other participating interdisciplinary programs. Advertisements will be run in all SSSP information documents, and an advertisement will also be run in the ASA Footnotes. [*These advertisements should refer potential applicants to the detailed description of the Executive Officer’s position posted on the SSSP Web page.*] Interested SSSP members in good standing may apply by submitting a letter of interest, CV, and a letter of support from the applicant’s Department Chair and corresponding Dean of the prospective host institution. The names and complete contact information of three other references must also be provided. **The letter of interest should include a statement of the applicants’ vision and understanding of the duties of the Executive Officer that is informed by the organization’s purpose as stated in the SSSP’s by-laws. The statement should also acknowledge the Executive Officer’s role in serving all segments of the Society and recognize shifts in member interests over time. The candidate should also indicate what support the host institution is willing to provide if selected for the Executive Office site.** Institutional support information should be corroborated by the letters from the Dean and/or Department Chair. [*Under ordinary circumstances, the deadline for submitting applications should be December 15 of Year 2, that is, the year before the annual meeting at which the new Executive Officer is selected. Applications will be submitted to the Executive Officer, who will distribute them to the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee (POSPC).*]
3. The Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee (POSPC), working in consultation with the Board and the Treasurer, will [DELETE--develop a screening procedure for evaluating the applications. The procedure will be sure to] [*screen applications. This screening will*] take into consideration the protection/promotion of affirmative action and cultural diversity interests, [*as well as the qualifications of the applicants and the resources available from the applicants’ institutions. Members of the POSPC may contact applicants and request additional information, including estimated budgets for operating the Executive Office at their institutions.*]

4. [DELETE--Once the screening process has been approved by the POSPC and Board, the POSPC will implement that process to identify the three most promising applications. Those applications will then be submitted to the Board for review and approval in consultation with the Treasurer. If the Board does not approve the three applicants, the POSPC will repeat the process until three applicants have been approved by the Board. The process up to this point must be completed no later than one month prior to the next annual meeting.] *[Prior to July 1 of Year 2, the POSPC will recommend the names and application files for up to three applicants to the Board for review and approval; at the same time, the Board should be informed of all completed applications. If the Board is not satisfied with the applications presented, they may request that the POSPC reconsider its recommendations, until agreement is reached on a list of up to three finalists. These finalists will be notified by the POSPC that they will be interviewed at the upcoming annual meeting.]*
5. Arrangements will be made by the Administrative Officer and Annual Meeting Manager so that during the Year 2 annual meeting, the POSPC and Board will separately interview the [DELETE--three] finalists. (The Administrative Officer may be called upon throughout the entire process for assistance in coordinating the various activities.) The POSPC will make its recommendation to the Board and the Board will use that information, as well as the information attained from its own interviews, to make a final selection.
6. Once the selection is made, two members of the POSPC and two members of the Board will visit the site to assure that everything is as expected. *[This visit should occur by November 1 following the annual meeting, that is, during Year 3.]*
7. Final deliberations will be made by the Board and, assuming the site was acceptable, the Board will make the appointment. If the site was not acceptable, the process will be repeated with remaining finalists until an acceptable site is identified. *[The final selection should occur no later than March 1 of Year 3.]*
8. The President of the Board, Chair of the POSPC, and newly appointed Executive Officer will then commence making arrangements to have the Executive Office moved to its new location. *[Ordinarily this transition will occur following the Year 3 annual meeting, that is at the beginning of Year 4.]*