

To: SSSP Board of Directors
From: Val Leiter, Chair, By-Laws Committee
Re: Annual Report of the Committee
Date: July 15, 2020

The By-Laws Committee considered one set of proposed bylaw changes over the past year, which was taken on at the request of the board. A new section of the by-laws was created, governing the resolutions process.

I would like to thank my fellow committee members, Héctor Delgado and Tracy Dietz for their quick and helpful work on the committee, and Michele Koontz for her excellent and constructive guidance over the past year. They are a wonderful group of colleagues who made this work possible.

The following amendment was approved by the board in 2019-2020 and in the general election in 2020 and is now in effect:

ARTICLE XIV

RESOLUTIONS

SECTION 1. Proposing Resolutions

Any current SSSP member may submit a resolution to the Board of Directors (BOD) for consideration. All resolutions must be submitted directly to the Vice-President of the Society, who also serves as the Chair of the Committee on Social Action (CSA). The Vice-President is in charge of the resolution process, representing the BOD. Resolutions must be consistent with and advance the SSSP mission, and must be submitted by April 30th in order to be eligible for consideration by the Society during that calendar year.

All proposed resolutions with the exception of those expressing thanks should contain a concise position statement concerning a social problem of urgent concern and the appropriate evidence and citations to support the position taken in the resolution. In most cases, the proposed resolution should include some sort of call for viable action on the part of the SSSP. This typically has involved a letter from the BOD directed to some public or private entity expressing concern, support, or protest. Other forms of appropriate action may be proposed, but ideally any other forms of action should be discussed in advance with the Vice-President prior to submitting the proposed resolution. If the proposed resolution is in support of or in opposition to a piece of legislation, a copy of the legislation or a place where members can access it *must* be provided. Likewise, if the proposal is in support of or in opposition to an existing statement by another organization, a copy of that statement or a place where members can access it *must* be provided. Members who want to propose a resolution should consult the Society's website for examples, suggestions, and the required resolution format.

SECTION 2. Review of Proposed Resolutions

The CSA reviews all submitted resolutions between May 1 and May 31. As a part of their review, the CSA can raise concerns, including format, citations, recommended actions and addresses, organization and flow of resolution, wordsmithing, and other technical requirements and edits; communicate with the proposer(s); and make recommendations to the resolution proposer(s), if needed.

By June 1, the CSA forwards a list of proposed resolutions to the BOD, with recommendations to advance or table each resolution, along with the text with each resolution in its current form. The BOD has the option of discussing a resolution with the CSA and/or the member(s) who submitted the resolution. At this juncture, the resolution “belongs” to the BOD. The resolution can, for example, be modified by the BOD before it is presented to the membership for discussion and vote.

By June 15, the BOD reviews the CSA’s list of resolutions and the text of the resolutions, and decides which resolutions to table and which to post to the Society’s website for membership comment.

Resolutions that the board is forwarding to the membership for consideration will be posted on the Society’s website by June 15. Between June 15 and July 15, the resolutions will be available for review and comment by the Society’s membership. During this review period, current members can express, online, their support or opposition to a resolution, and their reasoning. They can also propose changes to the resolution for the BOD’s consideration and final disposition.

Between July 15 and August 1, the BOD will finalize the list of resolutions and post the resolutions that have not been tabled to the SSSP website. The BOD may itself also choose to propose and post any resolutions by July 15, in response to current issues.

SECTION 3. Discussion of Proposed Resolutions at the Annual Meeting

All resolutions that the BOD posts to the Society’s website will be discussed during the Society’s Business Meeting during the Annual Meeting. Thirty minutes will be allocated to a discussion in favor of or in opposition to all proposed resolutions. At this juncture, resolutions cannot be modified. That discussion will be moderated by the Vice President, with the assistance of the Executive Officer. Every effort will be made to allow time for the discussion of each resolution being considered, with equal time to those in support of and those in opposition to each resolution.

SECTION 4. Voting on Proposed Resolutions

Immediately after the SSSP Annual Meeting, current members will vote online for or against each resolution, or abstain. The voting period will be two weeks. A resolution will pass if two-

thirds of the members voting online by the deadline vote in favor of the resolution. The final results of the vote shall be reported to the Committee on Social Action and the Board of Directors, and published as early as possible on the Society's website.

Rationale for this new by-laws section: The Society has been striving to improve the resolutions process for over a decade. These proposed by-laws amendments create by-laws that set out clear and consistent policies regarding proposed resolutions. A better-defined process is being proposed, to become a new section of the Society's by-laws. This process is aimed at providing the Society's resolution proposers and the Society's leadership a clear set of procedures and deadlines for any proposed resolutions.

Furthermore, the vote on resolutions will no longer take place during the Business Meeting at the Annual Meeting, which a relatively small number of members attend each year relative to the total Society membership. If the Society takes a public position on a controversial issue that may adversely affect the organization, either by causing divisions within the organization or the targeting of the organization by the government or other entity, the position should reflect the thinking or feeling of more than a mere majority of the members who attend the Business Meeting during the Annual Meeting. There should be strong membership support for any public position taken in the Society's name. This change in voting on resolutions gives all members the right to participate in the vote, and removes any need for proxy votes. Voting will be conducted online during the two weeks following the SSSP business meeting, allowing for full participation by all Society members.