

2025 Section Annual Report: Part 1 for SOCIOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Annual reports are used by the Sections Committee to assess the health of a Section, measure the Section's vitality, and identify processes, programs, or initiatives that could serve as a model for other Sections. In addition, they serve to provide institutional memory, socialize new Section leaders, and promote transparency to Section members.

This annual report covers the period of Section activity from September 2024 to August 2025 and a fiscal year from January 2025 to December 2025. This report is shared publicly.

Section Governance

Provide details of your Section's governance activity during the period between September 2024 and August 2025.

Business Meeting

Copy and paste below (or attach separately) the agenda and draft/approved meeting minutes from the Section business meeting which include a count of members present and summary of decisions made at this meeting. Minutes are not a transcript of proceedings, but a listing of what discussions took place and official actions taken.

AGENDA

- opening statement from chair
- report on finances
- report from Global South Interest Group and Feminist Development and Sociology of Global Health subgroups
- soliciting volunteers for next year's conference and for award committees, membership committee, reception committee, and newsletter
- recognize council members rotating off and welcome new members
- award ceremony
- open comments from attendees
- gavel passes to new chair

MINUTES

The Sociology of Development business meeting was held on August 9, 2025, at the ASA annual conference in Chicago, with 20 attendees. Chair Monica Prasad reported on the conference that was held in Washington D.C. in October 2024 and the launch of the Johns Hopkins Center on Global Poverty. A report on finances was given. Devparna Roy reported on events held by the Global South Interest Group, Jonathan Shaffer on the Sociology of Global Health subgroup, and Jennifer Keahey sent in an update from the Feminist Development subgroup. Volunteers were solicited for next year's conference, and for the next year's award committees, membership committee, reception committee, and newsletter. No volunteers were found yet for the newsletter. Council members rotating off were recognized (Alexandre White, Alejandro Cueto Piazza, Erin McDonnell) and those joining were welcomed (Joseph Harris, Rina Agarwala, Isabel Pike, Sebastian Rojas Cabal). Heidi Rademacher's work on the membership committee was

recognized, Noor Anwar Ali's work on the newsletter, and Timothy Gorman's on the website. The awards ceremony was held for the Best Student Article Award, Faculty Article Award, and Book Award. Open comments from attendees asked about the reception, and the gavel was passed to the next chair.

Council Meeting

Copy and paste below (or attach separately) the agenda and draft/approved meeting minutes of all council meetings. Minutes must include a list of council members present and a summary of decisions made. Minutes are not a transcript of proceedings, but a listing of what discussions took place and official actions taken.

August 21, 2024

Agenda:

- finalizing the language of the bylaws change
- and staffing our various committees (award committees, reception committee, membership committee, nominating committee, grad student outreach, global south outreach)

Minutes:

Present: Ji-won Lee, Heidi Rademacher, Holly Reed, Brian Dill, Nikhil Deb, Benjamin Bradlow, Alejandra Irene Cueto Piazza, Monica Prasad

1) The bylaws as attached were approved. We agreed (as discussed last time) to include the language clarifying that non-members of the section are eligible for the award. We also discussed whether to include the language indicating that committees may consider section membership, but we voted unanimously against including this. Reasons included that we do not want to add too many directives to the committees, and that it can be easy to forget to renew membership and we do not want to penalize people for that. We did not discuss the other changes, which do not seem controversial.

If there are other thoughts on this issue, please let me know; if I don't hear from anyone I will send these on to ASA, who will then solicit a vote on these changes from the section membership.

2) The following people volunteered to be on the following committees:

*Membership committee: Heidi Rademacher

*2025 ASA Conference committee: Brian Dill

*Reception committee: we will solicit someone local to Chicago from the membership to head this, but Brian Dill will serve as the liaison between this committee and council

*Book award committee: Nikhil Deb

*Article award committee: Holly Reed

*Student paper award committee: Ben Bradlow

*Grad student outreach: Heidi Rademacher, Alejandra Cueto Piazza

*Global South outreach: Ben Bradlow, Nikhil Deb, Alejandra Cueto Piazza

*Mentoring program: Holly Reed

In addition, the nominating committee head is, ex officio, the past chair, Erin McDonnell, the newsletter is being handled by Grace Wang and Noor Anwar Ali, and the website by Tim Gorman (Ji-won Lee volunteered to take over the website if/when Tim wants to step down).

January 15, 2025

Agenda:

- 1) Formal approval of spending \$1400 for ASA reception.
- 2) Will we do a conference this fall?
- 3) The membership campaign.

Attendees:

- Monica Prasad
- Erin McDonnell
- Ben Bradlow
- Brian Dill
- Heidi Rademacher
- Alejandra Cueto
- Holly Reed
- Andy Chang (Secretary)

1. Joint Reception in Chicago – \$1,400 Budget

Monica Prasad:

Monica plans to organize a comparative historical/global transnational joint reception in Chicago to save on costs and to use up the \$1,400 allocated for this purpose.

Erin McDonnell:

In the past, we have partnered with other sections, with at most 20 members from the Development section attending. If this trend continues, we need to decide whether it's a good use of section funds, given the small attendance. Our section members tend not to attend. Is there a better way to use this money?

Vote:

Unanimous agreement to allocate \$1,400, with no one proposing an alternative use of the fund.

2. Fall Mini-Conference Discussion – Brian Dill

Brian Dill:

We cannot host another conference in Illinois. Our department chair has pledged a small amount of money but is hesitant to overcommit. How about hosting the conference in D.C., similar to last fall, and having an open call to see if other departments would like to co-host a development conference. The total budget is \$5,000.

Monica Prasad:

We can use space in D.C. at a minimal cost, but we need to plan well in advance. The Center for Global Poverty at Johns Hopkins would likely be the key organization to lead this effort.

Erin McDonnell:

We can circulate a call to see if other schools would be willing to co-fund the event. Notre Dame, for instance, might be open to co-funding the plenary or smaller programs for Global South scholars. Even if a single department is unable to fund the full conference, perhaps we can get other departments across the country to contribute to smaller programs, such as a travel grant for graduate students.

Andy will circulate questions to the Development Section Listserv as part of the monthly newsletter. The questions to include are:

1. Is your institution interested in hosting and organizing the conference?
2. If not, or in addition, would you be willing to join the planning committee?
3. Irrespective of your decision on the previous two questions, do you think your department is able to contribute between \$1,000 and \$5,000 (for travel grants, plenary, Global South scholarships, or other uses that you can think of).

Direct responses to Brian Dill. Please reply by Friday, January 31st.

3. Membership Campaign – Heidi Rademacher

Heidi Rademacher discussed a push for membership after the development conference. She asked if there were thoughts on whether she should send out a second round of the email blast she did in the fall. Alternatively, we could send a list to everyone who participated in the mini-conference, encouraging those who are not already members to join the section. Heidi is looking for feedback before proceeding.

Monica and Alejandra Cueto:

They suggested sending personalized emails or organizing a member campaign, if there's enough manpower. They are available to help.

Next Steps:

Monica, Heidi, and Alejandra will divide the tasks of sending personalized emails and compiling a list. Heidi will reach out next week to the conference organizing committee to see if they are willing to assist. Alexander White, who was not present, has also volunteered to help.

4. Other Issues

Monica Prasad:

Monica raised the possibility of offering prizes to members who recruit the most new members.

Erin McDonnell:

There may be a significant drop in section membership, as many of our members are from interdisciplinary fields and area studies conferences. Some development sociologists have moved to other communities outside the ASA, which may be inherent to the nature of our section. Our members are often part of alternative academic communities.

Ben Bradlow:

Ben emphasized the importance of hosting conferences. He shared that he felt energized after attending the mini-conference, especially since one had not been held for 2-4 years. This could be contributing to the negative trend in membership, and holding regular mini-conferences might help reverse the decline.

Erin McDonnell:

Erin asked if the section is all set with prize and nomination committees.

Monica Prasad:

Monica suggested having another meeting after people respond to the questions about hosting the conference. She will send out information on award nominations in the next email.

August 11, 2025

AGENDA

- I. Staffing the Committees
- II. ASA change in panel allocations
- III. Discussion of whether to have a reception next August
- IV. Vote on Budget

V. Bylaws and Dues Changes

MINUTES

Attendees: Monica Prasad, Brian Dill, Heidi Rademacher, Nikhil Deb, Alexandre White, Erin McDonnell, Rina Agarwala, Sebastian Rojas Cabal, Isabel Pike, Holly Reed, Joseph Harris

Summary: The Sociology of Development Council met on August 11, 2025, at the ASA annual conference in Chicago. The council discussed communication tools including the newsletter, website, and policy briefs, with proposals to potentially combine these responsibilities into a paid communications position and develop a comprehensive communications plan. The group reviewed committee assignments for programming, awards, and mentoring, while also discussing the allocation of ASA conference sessions among subsections. Financial matters were addressed, including the section's budget constraints, potential dues increases, and a decision to replace the traditional reception with a catered business meeting to save costs while improving attendance.

Communication Tools:

Monica leads a discussion about the section's communication tools, particularly the newsletter and website. The group debates whether to continue the newsletter, with some members noting its value for graduate students and early scholars despite low readership, while others question if the labor required is justified. Erin and Monica suggest they could either let the newsletter "die a natural death" if no volunteers step forward or potentially combine the newsletter, website, and social media responsibilities into one paid communications position. The section needs to find replacements as the webmaster and one newsletter editor are rotating off. The group discusses creating a communications role that would involve tasks like podcasts, social media, and website updates, suggesting it should be paid and require multiple responsibilities to justify the cost. Sebastian expresses interest in the communications role. Sebastian proposes developing a comprehensive communications plan for the year that includes policy briefs, noting the lack of data on how many people read the current communications. Brian asks Sebastian to contact Yuanhang Zhu (who will be the sole newsletter editor, as Noor Anwar Ali is rotating off) to discuss moving forward with this plan, which could involve them taking charge of policy briefs or finding someone from the section to take over.

ASA Conference Session Allocation

The ASA is changing how they allocate sessions, and we will likely have one additional session next year. Brian proposes that each subsection (Political Economy, Global Health, Feminist Development, and Global South) get their own session. Monica mentions that they will most likely have four sessions total (ASA has not yet confirmed), with one slot reserved for the business meeting and roundtables, leaving three sessions to organize, which is an increase from this year's two sessions. Joseph, as chair-elect, agrees to be responsible for sending the sessions information to ASA.

Policy Brief Leadership Transition

The group discusses the future of the policy briefs, noting that while they haven't been widely promoted beyond the Listserv, they provide value as a publication platform for members even with limited downloads. Group members suggest keeping the policy briefs separate from other communications roles due to the workload involved and express reluctance to discontinue them despite needing to find new leadership after Laura Adams stepped down. The group considers

recruiting someone from the World Bank who understands the readership perspective, though Isabel mentions that one potential candidate, Rachel Perotti, likely wouldn't have capacity to take on the role.

Committee Assignments and Program Updates

Monica reviews various section committees including membership, programming, nominations, reception, awards, newsletter, website, outreach, and mentoring, asking for volunteers. Ben is assigned to the faculty article award, Isabel to the student article award, and Rina to book article award. Nikhil joins the student committee. Holly and Heidi are identified as being in their last year of service, making them eligible for the Nominations Committee, but Heidi is already taking on several other roles. The group discusses the Outreach Committee, but no one is currently in charge of it, and they decide to scratch it as it's unclear if it's a required committee. Holly agrees to continue running the mentoring program, which faced a shortage of mentors this year but received additional volunteers when requested.

Section Budget Review and Optimization

Monica reports that the section has \$5,645 in total assets, with an annual allocation from ASA of around \$1,667, though they spent \$1,880 last year. She discusses ways to reduce expenses, including finding cheaper alternatives for award plaques (currently \$60-65 each), and possibly switching to certificates for honorable mentions. The group also considers whether the \$130 website hosting cost could be reduced, with Sebastian agreeing it seems expensive, though the group notes other sections pay similar amounts and changing might be a hassle for minimal savings.

Reception Format Change Proposal

The group discusses changing the format of the section's reception, noting that in Philadelphia they had a catered business meeting instead of a reception, which increased attendance. Group members suggest this approach could save costs and avoid competing with other receptions during the designated time slot. The group considers using the reception budget for a catered business meeting that includes award presentations, while ensuring there's still time for member interaction through "table talk" topics. There seems to be general agreement on this proposal. They debate the timing structure, considering whether to have the business meeting before roundtables and whether to include informal conversation tables alongside formal roundtables.

Graduate Student Compensation Discussion

The group discusses whether to pay graduate students for communications work, with group members suggesting either a small payment of \$75 each or facilitating networking lunches with senior scholars. Sebastian and Alejandra prefer small payments but agree that \$75 seems too low to be meaningful. Sebastian notes that production costs for podcasts (like microphones) should be covered regardless, and suggests that while developmental benefits make volunteer positions acceptable, the section should have a dedicated communications budget line item for necessary expenses.

Budget Allocation and Vote

The group agrees to allocate \$1,000 for catering the business meeting and roundtables, \$350 for the award plaques and certificates, and \$250 for website and communications, with the understanding that they can revisit the budget if needed. There will be no reception. The vote on the budget is unanimous among those present.

Bylaws Discussion

The group briefly discuss bylaws changes, noting that they recently updated the bylaws. No proposals for bylaws changes are presented.

Section Dues Increase Discussion

The group notes that this section has relatively low dues compared to others. The group discusses raising section dues from \$10 to \$12 or \$13 for faculty members while keeping student rates low, noting that most other sections charge \$12-13 and the increase would generate approximately \$200-300 in additional funds. This money would be used to pay the communications team to develop a more systematic communications approach that could increase section cohesion and build community. Joseph points out that few sections charge only \$10, and Holly believes a \$5 increase for faculty wouldn't be a deterrent. Brian agrees to initiate the dues increase process with ASA, which appears to be lengthy, and will reach out to other section chairs to learn from their experiences with dues increases and paying webmasters. The meeting concludes with Brian taking over as chair, planning to contact Sebastian about the communications plan and follow up with everyone once he has the minutes.

Next steps

Monica: Lead the Nominations Committee to solicit people to run for Council and Chair. Holly will also serve on the committee.

Sebastian: Contact yuanhang.zhu@yale.edu about the communications position and discuss combining newsletter, website, social media, and other communications functions. Along with Brian, develop a comprehensive communications plan for the section and present it at the next council meeting, including finding someone to take over the policy briefs if it will be kept separate.

Heidi: Lead the Membership Committee and conduct the membership drive.

Heidi: Arrange the reception at ASA as part of the Reception Committee.

Joseph: Coordinate the programming committee and organize sessions for ASA.

Isabel: Chair student paper award committee (Nikhil will serve as a member).

Ben: Chair faculty article award committee.

Rina: Chair book award committee.

Holly: Continue the mentoring program.

Brian: Find cheaper options for award plaques.

Sebastian: Explore cheaper website hosting options.

Brian and Joseph: Discuss session organization for the upcoming ASA conference.

Monica: Collect votes from absent council members on the proposed budget.

Heidi: Research catering costs for the business meeting and roundtables in New York.

Brian: Reach out to other section chairs about their experiences with dues increases and paying communications staff.

Brian: Check with ASA about the process for establishing a fund for free graduate student memberships.

Brian: Investigate the process for increasing faculty dues from \$10 to \$12 or \$13.

Monica: Write the annual report.

Communications Team: Manage the \$250 budget for website and communications expenses.

Summary

Awards

Provide a list of Section awards and awardees conferred in the past year.

2025 Sociology of Development Best Student Article Award

Committee:

Benjamin Bradlow (chair), Princeton University; Livio Silva-Muller, Geneva Graduate Institute; Elena Shih, Brown University

Co-Winners:

Matthew Blanton, University of Texas-Austin

"A Legacy of Displacement: Latent Historical Pathways of Guatemalan Migration"

Unpublished

Zep Kalb, Princeton University

"Mobilized Resistance and Development under Sanctions in Iran."

Development and Change 55, no. 5 (2024): 933-964

2025 Sociology of Development Faculty Article Award

Committee:

Holly E. Reed (chair), City University of New York (CUNY); Jason Mueller, Kennesaw State University; Catherine van de Ruit, Ursinus College; Robert Wyrod, University of Colorado, Boulder

Winner:

Roshan K. Pandian, Southern Methodist University

"The Decline of Global Inequality in the 21st Century: Reconsidering the Industrial Transformation Thesis." American Journal of Sociology 129, no. 5 (2024): 1493-1534.

Honorable Mentions:

Benjamin H. Bradlow, Princeton University

"Urban Social Movements and Local State Capacity"

World Development 173 (2024): 1-13

Amanda R. Cheong, University of British Columbia

"Theorizing Omission: State Strategies for Withholding Official Recognition of Personhood"

Sociological Theory 41, no. 4 (2023): 377-402.

2025 Sociology of Development Book Award

Committee:

Rina Agarwala, Nikhil Deb (chair), Zophia Edwards, Ricardo Jacobs, Li Zhang

Winner:

Yingyao Wang, University of Virginia

Markets with Bureaucratic Characteristics: How Economic Bureaucrats Make Policies and Remake the Chinese State.

Columbia University Press, 2024

Honorable Mentions:

Manisha Anantharaman, Institut d'études politiques, Paris
Recycling class: the contradictions of inclusion in urban sustainability
MIT Press, 2024

Benjamin H. Bradlow, Princeton University
Urban power: Democracy and Inequality in São Paulo and Johannesburg
Princeton University Press, 2024

2025 Finances

Provide a narrative on how the 2025 budget matched with actual expenses and income from 2024. Please account for any substantive differences.

In the year to August 2025 the section had \$1667 in income, and \$1827 in expenses. The largest expense was the ASA reception, which cost \$1282, and the second item was award plaques, which cost \$545. The beginning balance was \$4523 and the ending balance for this period was \$4363.

We had budgeted \$1400 for the reception, and came in under budget. However, the amount paid for award plaques, from the vendor suggested by ASA, was much higher than the \$250 budgeted. In considering finances the council discussed both the reception, and the award plaques, at its meeting during ASA. We will once again try an alternative to the section reception at next year's annual meeting. We should also be able to save money on award plaques by moving to providing certificates instead of plaques for honorable mentions.

We are also exploring the possibility of raising the membership dues in order to pay for a communications position.

The Previous Year

Describe Section activities during the period between September 2024 and August 2025.

Provide an overview of the Section's communications with its members and include explanation of how your communication strategy meets the goals and values of the Section. Include links to the section website, newsletters, and any other electronic media used.

The section maintains a listserv and sends announcements to all members twice a month. These announcements include updates on the section's annual conference, activities of the subsections such as webinars, call for contributions to the newsletter, announcements about member publications, job openings, call for papers, etc.

The section also publishes a semi-annual newsletter, *Sectors*, which includes features like book symposia, articles about current events, and professional development articles. Copies of recent issues are available here:

<https://sociologyofdevelopment.com/sectorsnewsletters/>

The section publishes occasional policy briefs, which are the most downloaded of the section's offerings:

<https://sociologyofdevelopment.com/policybriefs/>

Lastly, the section maintains a website (<https://sociologyofdevelopment.com/>) where many of these resources are featured.

At this year's council meeting the members held a long discussion about whether our communication strategy was meeting the needs of members, and whether and how to update it given new technologies such as podcasts and social media. It was decided to appoint a new role of communications director, which would be a paid position staffed by a graduate student. This person's role would be to coordinate the various communication offerings and propose new ones. The council members continue to discuss this at periodic meetings.

Describe the Section's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. What steps were taken this year to achieve those goals?

Our section is naturally diverse, as we study a topic that is of interest to scholars from around the world. We also intentionally recruit diverse section leaders and volunteers, in accordance with our bylaws. A key element of this ongoing effort is the Global South Interest Group, which serves as a forum to integrate scholars from the Global South. This year the group held four online events, including two "works in progress" symposia for junior scholars, and an event called "The Light and the Dark in Development Sociology," and they also collaborated with the Feminist Development sub-section to put together an online event called "Contemporary Approaches in the Sociology of Gender and Development." We also hold a mentoring event to integrate younger scholars into the section and the field.

Provide an overview of the section's programming at the annual meeting and include explanation of how this programming meets the goals and values of the section (e.g. intellectual exchange, professional networking, mentoring, inclusion).

2025 ASA Sociology of Development section events

Sat, August 9, 10:00 to 11:00am
Section on Sociology of Development Roundtables
Swissotel, Floor: Concourse Level, Zurich B

Sat, August 9, 11:00 to 11:30am
Section on Sociology of Development Business Meeting and Awards Ceremony
Swissotel, Floor: Concourse Level, Zurich B

Sat, August 9, 2:00 to 3:30pm
Panel: Problem-Solving Sociology of Development
West Tower, Hyatt Regency Chicago, Floor: Ballroom Level/Gold, New Orleans

Sat, August 9, 4:00 to 5:30pm
Panel: New Directions in the Sociology of Development
Swissotel, Floor: Concourse Level, Zurich A

Mon, August 11, 6:30 to 8:00pm
Section Reception (joint with other sections)
East Tower, Hyatt Regency Chicago, Floor: Ballroom Level/Gold, Grand
Ballroom A

The portfolio of events includes events for members at all career stages: graduate students needing mentorship (and more experienced scholars wanting to provide mentorship), scholars submitting their first contributions to roundtables, an open panel and a dedicated panel, and awards to recognize the best of the scholarship.

Provide an overview of the Section's programmatic activities outside of the Annual Meeting (e.g. webinars, networking events, mentoring initiatives, resources for dissemination) and include explanation of this programming meets the goals and values of the Section.

This section's main intellectual activity outside of the ASA meetings is an annual conference organized by section members. It draws participants from the section membership, and is our main tool in recruiting new members. In October 2024 we held a conference on global poverty funded by the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C. that consisted of 25 panels, four plenary events, three breakfasts, three lunches, and a trivia night pizza party. In addition to section members, participants included practitioners of global development from the World Bank, [then still active] USAID, and other development organizations. We also had participants from other disciplines, including political science and economics. The conference program and photos are available here: <https://socdev2024.weebly.com/>

The section and its subgroups also hold periodic webinars, e.g.:

November 11, 2024, 4PM Eastern time
Online workshop on writing policy briefs

April 25, 2025, 1:00-2:30PM (US Eastern Time)
The Attack on USAID

The Global South Interest Group (GSIG) events were as follows:

On October 31st 2024, GSIG held the "Works-in-Progress" Symposium (Part I) to highlight the intellectual contributions of junior scholars in development sociology. Maria Haro Sly, Dr. Bankole Falade, and Grace Wang presented their papers. Discussants were Dr. Paul Gellert (for Maria's paper) and Dr. Tuba Agartan (for Bankole and Grace's paper). Dr. Devparna Roy was the host of this event.

On November 7th 2024, GSIG held the "Works-in-Progress" Symposium (Part II) to highlight the intellectual contributions of junior scholars in development sociology. Rehana Odendaal and Tomas Gold presented their papers. Discussants were Dr. Erin McDonnell (for Rehana's paper) and Dr. Sam Cohn (for Tomas's paper). Dr. Enrique Pumar was the host of this event.

On March 27th 2025, GSIG held the online event titled "The Light and the Dark in Development Sociology." Dr. Andrew Schrank and Dr. Jasmin Hristov presented their papers. Dr. Enrique Pumar served as the discussant of both papers. Dr. Sam Cohn served as the host of this event.

On April 24th 2025, the Feminist Development sub-section and the Global South Interest Group collaborated to put together an online event titled “Contemporary Approaches in the Sociology of Gender and Development” featuring three distinguished scholars: Dr. Ana Laura Rodriguez Gusta (South Africa), Dr. Nandini Sundar (India), and Dr. Khayaat Fakier (South Africa). We wish to thank the following Development Sociology members who worked hard to put together this event: Catherine Van de Ruit, Milena Arancibia, Rita Jalali, Esther Moraes, Isabel Pike, Bahar Aldamaz Fidan, Jessica Kim, Rebekah Burroway and Jennifer Keahey.