

August 12, 2025

THE MANUAL OF THE OFFICIAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES OF THE RURAL SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TABLE OF CONTENTS

Policies and Procedures Table of Contents	2
Purpose of this Manual	6
RSS Membership	7
Privacy of Member Information	7
RSS Leadership.....	8
RSS Leadership Council	10
General Responsibilities of Council Members	10
Eligibility to Hold Office in the RSS	10
Standing Committee of the RSS Council.....	11
Executive Committee.....	11
President.....	13
Past President.....	15
President-Elect	16
Vice President	17
Liaison Officers and Representatives to Affiliate and Kindred Organizations.....	17
Requests to Join Affiliate or Kindred Organizations	19
Secretary	21
Executive Director/Treasurer.....	23
Management of the RSS Business Office	23
Professional Communications	23
Meeting Management	24
Fiscal Management	24
RSS Accounts and Budgeting.....	25
Money Management Policies.....	26
Guidelines for Distribution of Endowment Funds	27
Standing Committees of the Society.....	29
Procedure for Appointing Student Representatives to Standing Committees.....	30
Awards and Endowment Committee	31
Responsibilities of the Chair of the Awards and Endowment Committee.....	31
Conflict of Interest Policy	32
The Code of Ethics Policy	32
The Society Awards Subcommittee of the Awards and Endowment Committee.....	32
Awards Conferred by the Society Awards Subcommittee.....	34
The Endowment Awards Subcommittee of the Awards and Endowment Committee	38

Responsibilities of the Chair of the Endowment Awards Subcommittee:	39
Guidance for Award Nominations by Members of the Society	40
Development Committee	44
Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee	45
Ethics Committee.....	49
Responsibilities and Authority of RSS Ethics Committee.....	49
Authority of RSS Ethics Committee.....	49
Operating Rules	49
Enforcement of the RSS Code of Ethics	50
Sanctions	53
Confidentiality	53
Membership Committee.....	55
Duties of the Chair of the Membership Committee include:	55
Nominations Committee	56
Duties of the Chair of the RSS Nominations Committee:	56
Program Committee	58
Duties of the Chair of the RSS Program Committee:	58
Research and Interest Groups	60
RIG Membership Dues/Fees.....	60
Duties of the RIG Chairs.....	60
Publications Committee	62
Publication Committee Responsibilities	62
Responsibilities of the Publications Committee Chair.....	62
Selecting Editors for RSS Publications.....	63
RSS Publications.....	66
Graduate Student Representatives to Council and Committees.....	67
Graduate Student Representatives to Council.....	67
Graduate Student Representatives to Standing and Ad hoc Committees.....	68
Procedure for Appointing Student Representatives to Standing Committees.....	68
Ad hoc Committees of the Society	69
Communications Committee	69
Communications Committee Responsibilities	69
Communications Committee Oversight of RIG Webpage Hosting on http://www.ruralsociology.org ..	69
Communications Committee Oversight of Graduate Student Job- Search Posting	70
Guidelines on Statements by RSS.....	70
Annual Meetings of the Society.....	72

Site Selection Criteria for RSS Annual Meetings	72
Meeting Finances and Budget.....	73
Annual Meeting Fees	73
RSS Policy on Exhibits, Advertisements, and Sales.....	74
RSS Policies of a Transient Nature.....	74
Indigenous Land Acknowledgement	74
Appendices.....	75
APPENDIX A: Membership Categories, effective AUGUST 2025	75
Professional Income and Student Membership Dues Categories	75
Research and Interest Groups (RIGs)	75
Failure to Complete Payment of Lifetime Membership Fee.....	76
APPENDIX B: Contracts.....	77
Digital Conversion of Contracts	77
Electronic Access – Publisher’s Contracts.....	77
Cooperation with Cornell Library.....	77
APPENDIX C: Policy Statement on Reimbursement of Travel Expenses-General Information	78
Method of Transportation	78
Lodging.....	79
Meals.....	79
Allowance for Domestic Travel.....	79
Allowance for Foreign Travel.....	80
Registration Fees.....	80
Reimbursement Process.....	80
Timeliness Requirements.....	80
Travel Expenses Paid by Other Organizations.....	80
APPENDIX D: RSS Policy on Exhibits, Advertisements, and Sales	81
APPENDIX E: Complete Code of Ethics and Policies and Procedures, as of July 28, 2017	82
APPENDIX F: Research and Interest Groups Policy Manual	103
What Functions Do RIGs Serve?	103
Holding Annual RIG Business Meetings.....	103
Selecting RIG Leadership	104
Planning RIG Sessions for the RSS Annual Meeting.	104
Communication among RIG Members	104
How Do RIGs Earn Money?.....	105
How Can RIGs Spend Money?.....	105
Guidelines for paper awards	106

Guidelines for field trips	106
APPENDIX G: Scientific Organization Membership Proposal Request.....	108
APPENDIX H: RSS Sponsorship categories.....	110

List of Tables

Table 1. RSS Leadership.....	8
Table 2. Affiliate and Kindred Organizations.....	18
Table 3. Recommended Timeline for the Awards Subcommittee	33
Table 4. Recommended Timeline for the Endowment Awards Subcommittee.....	39

MANUAL OF THE OFFICIAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES OF THE RURAL SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY

PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

This manual is intended to guide the members and officers of the Rural Sociological Society, hereinafter called RSS or the Society, with detail to fulfill their duties as presented in the Constitution and Bylaws. The RSS Leadership Council compiled this Manual, recognizing the need to codify and maintain the Society's policies and procedures in a form that is publicly available and can be readily maintained and transmitted over time. This Manual will be organized to facilitate transparency, ease, and speed of reference.

The contents of this manual shall govern RSS Officers, the RSS Leadership Council, and Society membership and may be changed by a vote of Council consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws. While this manual's contents do not replace any requirements of the RSS Constitution and Bylaws, they permit the RSS President to charge standing and *ad hoc* committees with specific responsibilities not specified in the Constitution and Bylaws.

This Manual will be reviewed annually by the Past President to ensure continued consistency with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society, as well as changes approved by Council and/or vote of the general membership. This Manual will be maintained in the RSS Business Office and posted online on the Official RSS Website.

RSS MEMBERSHIP

As stated in the RSS Constitution, membership in the Society is open to any person interested in the mission of the Society upon application and payment of dues. An applicant must indicate the membership class for which they qualify—Professional Member within Specified Income Ranges, Emeritus Member, and Student Member—and, subject to review by the Membership Committee, pay dues commensurate with that membership class. Registration options will also include the option to contribute to a portion of a first-time student's membership. The Executive Director, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will set and update dues associated with each category. Members will be notified of any changes, and the current dues schedule will be published on the RSS website. All members whose dues are current are eligible to vote in general and special elections. Additionally, all members whose dues are current are eligible to be nominated and stand for election for an RSS leadership position.

Privacy of Member Information

RSS collects personal membership information to enable it to facilitate communication between the Society and its members and to better describe our Society, in aggregate, to the public. All personal data are confidential. All participation is voluntary. RSS DOES NOT RELEASE MEMBERS' NAMES OR ELECTONIC ADDRESSES TO NONMEMBERS. This language will be posted on the Web page and included on the online membership form.

RSS LEADERSHIP

RSS Leadership includes voting and non-voting members of the RSS Leadership Council, including the President, Past President, President-elect, Vice President, Secretary, and Executive Director/Treasurer(s) who comprise the Executive Committee, along with six Council Members elected at-large, four Council Members appointed from the general membership, two student members, and one or two members appointed to Chair the Program Committee. The six elected and four appointed Council members are assigned to lead one of five Standing Committees of the Society, first as Chair-elect and then as Chair. These Standing Committees include: Awards and Endowment, Development, JEDI, Membership, and Publications. Assignments of the just-elected council members to the standing committees will be made after elections in Spring/Summer of each year by the President in consultation with the President-elect and the just elected President-elect.

Additional Standing Committees include the Ethics Committee and the Nominations Committee, whose Chair and two members are elected from the general membership. With the exception of the Executive Director/Treasurer and RSS Business Office personnel, all leadership positions are voluntary and do not receive salary or payment. The table below summarizes the office, term, and selection method for each position. In addition to these officers, the Council enlists as volunteers a number of non-voting members to serve as liaisons or representatives to kindred organizations, and to serve on ad hoc committees.

Table 1. RSS Leadership

TITLE	TERM	HOW ELECTED OR APPOINTED	VOTING PRIVILEGES
President	1 year	Automatic succession from President-elect	Tie-breaking only
Past President	1 year, following year as President	Automatic succession from President	Yes. Advises President and continues a seat on Council.
President-elect	1 year, preceding year as President	General Election	Yes
Vice President	1 year	General Election	Yes
Secretary	3 years, with carry-over responsibilities in year 4	General Election	Yes, each year of term
Six Council Members Elected At-Large (3 in number annually)	3 years, staggered terms	General Election	Yes, each year of term
Two Student Member Representative(s) (1 in number annually)	2 years, staggered terms	General Election	Yes, each year of term
Four Council Members Appointed from the General Membership (2 in number annually)	3 years, staggered terms	Appointed by President-elect	Yes, but only in second year on Council when the President-elect ascends to the Presidency and the appointed Council Member has ascended

TITLE	TERM	HOW ELECTED OR APPOINTED	VOTING PRIVILEGES
			to Chair of assigned Standing Committee
Chair(s) of Program Committee (1 or 2 in number annually)	1 year	Appointed by President-elect	Yes, but only 1 has voting privilege
Chairs-elect of Standing Committees (Awards & Endowment, Development, JEDI, Membership, and Publications)	1 year, ascending automatically to Chair of Standing Committee in 2nd year as Council Member	Appointed by President-elect from among the three new elected Council Members and two new appointed Council Members	No additional vote beyond that as elected or appointed Council Member
Chair of Nominations Committee	1 year	General Election	No. Has no vote and no seat on Council
Chair-elect of Nominations Committee	1-year, then ascends to Chair of Nominations	General Election	Has no vote on Council
Chair of Ethics Committee	1 year (members of committee serve three year terms)	General Election (all members)	Has no vote on Council
Vacancies on Council and Leadership of Standing Committees		Appointed by President from general members	
IRSA Representatives (3 in number)	4 years, renewable	General Election (all members)	No. Holds no seat on Council
Executive Director/Treasurer	3 years, renewable	Appointed by President with Ratification by Leadership Council	No

RSS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The RSS Leadership Council is presided over by the Society President and consists of the President-elect, Vice President, Secretary, Executive Director/Treasurer as a non-voting advisor, six Society members elected at-large, four Society members appointed by the President-elect, two graduate student members elected by their peers or appointed by the President-elect, and one (or two) Society members appointed by the President to (co)Chair the Program Committee. The Past President serves the President in an advisory capacity, and retains a seat on Council as a voting member. A quorum for Council meetings will consist of a simple majority, 9 of the 17 voting members of Council.

The six elected Council members at-large and the four appointed Council members appointed are assigned to lead one of five Standing Committees of Council, including the Awards and Endowment, Development, JEDI, Membership, and Publications committees. These Council members are assigned as Chairs-elect of the Standing Committee at the beginning of their first term in office and ascend to full Chair responsibility at the beginning of their second term of office. In this way, each standing committee has voting representation on Council, and there is continuity in committee leadership. All chairs and chair-elects are Council members, and chair-elects are invited to attend Council meetings, but only chairs are required to attend Council meetings. Elected members can vote on Council during both years of their terms. Appointed members do not vote on Council until their second year, when they ascend to the chair position.

General Responsibilities of Council Members

1. Participate in all scheduled and called Council meetings during their term of office.
 - a. These may include Council meetings scheduled immediately preceding and immediately following the Annual Meeting and a Midyear Council meeting generally scheduled halfway between the two Annual Meetings, around February.
 - b. Additional virtual meetings may be called by the President as needed.
 - c. The RSS may subsidize travel of Council Members to the mid-year Council meeting as necessary and as resources allow. Mid-year meetings may also be held virtually.
2. Approve the financial plan of the Society.
3. Respond promptly to written, electronic, and phone queries between meetings as needed.
4. Provide items for the *RSS eBulletin* as appropriate.
5. Attend to all duties of the Standing Committees to which they belong.

Eligibility to Hold Office in the RSS

1. Only Life, Professional, and Emeritus members are eligible to hold office, with the exception of student members who may be elected as Student Representatives to the Council
2. Candidates for office must be full time residents of the United States or Canada.
3. Dues must be current upon taking office.
4. All members of Council must be RSS members in good standing both when they are appointed to Council and/or when they are elected to Council, as appropriate.
5. Candidates must agree to attend the Annual Meetings and mid-year Council meetings at their own- or institutional-expense for the time period they hold office, the possibility of an RSS travel

subsidy notwithstanding. Elected members must attend meetings for the entirety of their terms; appointed members may attend as non-voting members during their chair-elect years, but are only required to attend during their years as chair. Elected members of Nominations and Ethics Committees do not need to attend Council meetings, as they are non-voting members (and Nominations chairs do not have a seat on Council).

6. Members may not hold more than one elected or appointed office at a time, with the exception of the Vice-president who also serves as Chair of the RIGs Standing Committee, and with the exception of members who provide dual service as members of standing or ad hoc committees.
7. Representatives to the International Rural Sociological Association (IRSA) must agree to attend the World Congress for Rural Sociology held every fourth year both in the year at the beginning and at the end of their term. Moreover, they are expected to attend the RSS Annual Meeting.

Standing Committee of the RSS Council

The overall purpose of the Standing Committee of the RSS Council shall be to devote more concentrated focus and follow-through on issues deemed by Council to require additional attention between officially convened Council meetings. The Executive Committee is now the single standing committee of the Council. It replaces the Operations and Financial Affairs Committee (OFAC) and absorbs the duties of the Liaison Board of Outreach (LBO). The composition and function of the Council's Standing Committee shall be as follows:

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the following officers of RSS: Past President, President, President-Elect, Vice-President, and Secretary, as well as the Executive Director/Treasurer(s) who serve(s) as non-voting advisors. The Past President shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee. The responsibilities of the Committee shall be to oversee the administrative, financial, and general organizational affairs of the Society and to establish policy and other guidelines as appropriate for the operations of the RSS Business Office. The Committee shall review and approve the annual operating budget and annual meeting budget of the RSS, as presented by the Executive Director/Treasurer(s) before they are presented to the full Council for adoption, and periodically review and recommend changes as necessary. The Executive Committee shall oversee compliance with fiduciary policies and practices, and recommend changes to Council as needed.

The Executive Committee also:

- Reviews and approves a long-range financial plan and strategies. The Executive Director(s)/Treasurer(s) must notify and receive approval from the Executive Committee before an investment is made.
- Reviews findings from periodic external auditor in consultation with the Executive Director(s)/Treasurer(s).
- Reviews and recommends action on other matters dealing with the organizational affairs of RSS as appropriate, including those brought forth by the Committee members in carrying out the duties of their respective offices.
- Advises the Executive Director(s)/Treasurer(s) regarding long-term planning of annual conference, including location decisions.

The Executive Committee must review and approve in advance the spending plans of Standing and Ad hoc Committees, as well as the volunteer Student Representatives. RSS Standing and Ad Hoc

Committees must seek and receive approval from the President and Executive Director/Treasurer to purchase any items between \$100 and \$499, and from the entire Executive Committee to purchase any items over \$500.

The ceiling and floor amounts, \$100 and \$499, should be reviewed every three years, or more often, dependent on the state of the economy and the sense of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for developing and proposing to Council such additional steps and mechanisms that appear to offer promise for maintaining and strengthening the Society's collaborations and partnerships with other organizations and shall address other related tasks as assigned by the President. The Executive Committee shall report back to the RSS Council on the status of these efforts at the mid-year Council meeting.

PRESIDENT

The responsibilities of the President are broadly described in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Rural Sociological Society. These duties are described in more detail below.

The President is responsible for the conduct of the Annual Meeting. The President determines the theme of the Annual Meeting and delivers the Presidential Address at that Annual Meeting.

The President is responsible for setting the agenda for Council Meetings and the Annual Business Meeting of the Membership, with the support of the Secretary and the Executive Director/Treasurer.

The President works with the President-elect who is nearing the end of their term and the just elected President-elect in appointing members of standing committees as required by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society.

All committees should be appointed prior to the or immediately after the Annual Meeting at which the President-elect becomes the President.

Further responsibilities of the President include to:

1. Set the direction of the organization, including charges for the standing committees.
2. Develop and propose to the Council a strategic plan as necessary.
3. Coordinate activities of the Council.
4. Preside over the Leadership Council Meetings and the Annual Business Meeting, as well as the Annual Meeting.
5. Identify special features he/she wishes to include in the Annual Meeting for which he/she is responsible.
6. Serve as a member of the Executive Committee of the Society to, among other things, discuss financial issues of the society, review the Executive Director/Treasurer's Report, and make recommendations to the Council about financial issues.
7. Fill any empty committee positions of outgoing members before the Annual Meeting. (With exceptions, three members per standing committee are usually appointed.)
8. Appoint, in cooperation with the President-elect, Chairs-elect of the Awards and Endowment, Development, JEDI, Membership, and Publications Committees from the five newly elected and appointed members of Council. Additionally, the President shall appoint two new members to each standing committee, and two members to the Nominations Committee to join the annually elected Chair of the Committee.
9. Serve as an *ex officio* member of the Development and Program Committees.
10. Serve as liaison to all other committees to facilitate their functioning.
11. Appoint the Executive Director/Treasurer subject to ratification by the Council.
12. Develop a plan to promote institutional support for the Society.
13. Appoint liaisons to other organizations, and other offices, as the opportunity arises.
14. Along with the Past President, represent the Society on the Professional Associations Advisory Group to the Board of Agriculture, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, as appropriate, and as requested by those boards.

15. Assist the President-elect to appoint the Representatives to the Consortium of Social Science Associations.
16. Along with the Past President, President-elect, one of the student representatives, and the Awards and Endowment Committee Chair, establish guidelines for selection of the poster award, judge eligible submitted posters, and confer awards at the Annual Meeting.

PAST PRESIDENT

The responsibilities of the Past-President are broadly described in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Rural Sociological Society. Those duties are described in more detail below.

The Past President has the responsibility to:

1. Assume carry-over duties, as appropriate, in transition from office to instruct and inform the incoming officers.
2. Council, mentor, and advise the President and provide institutional memory to the President and Leadership Council.
3. Chair the Executive Committee of the Society to, among other things, discuss financial issues of the society, review the Executive Director/Treasurer's Report, and make recommendations to the Council about financial issues.
4. Along with the President, represent the Society on the Professional Associations Advisory Group to the Board of Agriculture, the National Research Council, and the National Academy of Sciences, as requested and appropriate.
5. Along with the President, President-elect, and Awards and Endowment Committee Chairperson, establish guidelines for selection of the poster award, judge eligible submitted posters, and confer awards at the Annual Meeting.
6. Review and revise on an annual basis, as appropriate, the Policy and Procedures manual that governs the operation of the Society.

PRESIDENT-ELECT

The responsibilities of the President-elect are broadly described in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Rural Sociological Society. These duties are described in more detail below.

The President-elect has the responsibility to:

1. In the summer that they begin the position, aid the president in appointing incoming Council members to committees where they will serve as chair during the President-elect's term as President. Each incoming Council member will be appointed to serve as Chair-elect of one standing committee. In the second year of Council service, they will assume the role of Chair of that committee. The outgoing President-elect should begin to work on these assignments in the spring and summer, once the election results are in, and should consult with the newly elected President-elect in this process. To the greatest extent feasible, all other committee Chairs should be expected to serve as members of the same Committees they are expected to Chair during at least the year before they take office as Chairs. However, the Chair of Nominations is an elected position, and the Chair of the RIGs Committee is the Vice-President.
2. Assist the President in appointing one additional person from the RSS membership to each standing committee, each to serve a three-year term.
3. Student representatives to the remaining three Standing committees are appointed by the President-elect, in consultation with the President. Those representatives serve for a one-year term and are recruited to serve through open call to the membership and past meeting attendees.
4. Participate in both Council meetings chaired by her/his predecessor (e.g., the midyear and the summer meeting immediately prior to the Annual Meeting.)
5. After the Annual Business Meeting of the year she/he is elected, serve on the Executive Committee to discuss financial issues of the society, review the Executive Director/Treasurer's Report, and make recommendations to the Council about financial issues, among other things.
6. Attend as many Standing and Ad hoc Committee meetings as is feasible during the Annual Meeting held immediately prior to her/his succession to the Presidency to be informed about issues being discussed by the various committees and about issues affecting the viability of the Society.
7. Assist the President as necessary and perform all duties of the President in the event of the President's absence or disability.
8. Select a theme for the Annual Meeting at which she/he will subsequently preside.
9. Appoint the Representatives to the Consortium of Social Science Associations with assistance from the President, if needed or desired, depending on the current affiliation of RSS with COSSA.
10. Along with the Past President, President, a student representative, and the Awards and Endowment Committee Chairperson, establish guidelines for selection of the poster award, judge eligible submitted posters, and confer awards at the Annual Meeting.

VICE PRESIDENT

The Vice President position is elected by general election of the membership in the summer preceding the RSS Annual Meeting. The Vice President is not in the line of succession to the Presidency, but does serve on the Executive Committee during his/her term of office. The one- year term begins with the first of two meetings of the RSS Leadership Council that wrap around the Annual Meeting the year the Vice President is elected.

The responsibilities of the Vice-President are broadly described in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Rural Sociological Society. These duties are described in more detail below.

The Vice-President has the responsibility to:

1. Attend both Leadership Council meetings that wraparound the RSS Annual Meeting in the year elected (year one), the mid-year Council meeting, and the first Council meeting of year two.
2. Introduce the President at the annual meeting Presidential Address.
3. Serve on the Executive Committee to discuss financial issues of the society, review the Executive Director/Treasurer's Report, and make recommendations to the Council about financial issues, among other things.
4. Serve as principal liaison between the RIG Chairs and the Leadership Council, monitor the RIGs, attend as many RIG meetings as feasible during the Annual Meeting of the Society, and chair the RIG standing committee.
5. Coordinate efforts with President-elect to visit standing committee meetings held at annual meeting.
6. Coordinate liaisons with other professional (affiliate and kindred) associations, assisting as representatives, as appropriate, to carry out their responsibilities. Vice-President makes clear the roles, expectations, and terms of appointment, and receives written descriptions from Liaisons of the activities of their assigned organization and the related tasks of the liaison. Vice President maintains contact with appropriate representatives of the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) and the National Rural Development Partnership (NRDP) and other kindred organizations to reinforce its interest in joining forces in mutually beneficial ways to serve the needs of rural people and places and seek opportunities for jointly pursuing activities. The Vice President also shall be responsible for facilitating communication between the RSS and other organizations, be they public or private, in the interests of educating them about rural sociology and the activities of the Rural Sociological Society, and of building stronger partnerships with persons and organizations that share the goals of the Society.
7. Nominate RSS members, when appropriate, to affiliate and kindred organizations for national and international awards.

Liaison Officers and Representatives to Affiliate and Kindred Organizations

The Society affiliates itself with other Professional Organizations to achieve its mission. These affiliations include other professional associations, consortia of associations, and individuals with a specific and related mission to that of the RSS. The Society appoints a representative to each of these organizations to foster active collaboration and increase communication. The RSS representative to each affiliate and kindred organization is expected to provide a short report on an annual basis of activities and how this relationship benefits RSS members. In cases like that with COSSA, the affiliation is quite active, and

separate programs are planned in which RSS plays a role equal to other associations directed at affecting policy and resource allocation decisions for social science research.

Affiliate and Kindred Organizations

The Society, subject to approval of the Leadership Council, pays annual dues to Affiliate and Kindred Organizations for Society and/or Liaison membership. The Vice President serves as the Officer who coordinates and monitors the activities of RSS Liaisons/Representatives to these organizations. The Development Committee periodically re-examines the form of RSS representation to all Affiliate and Kindred Organizations and makes recommendations to Council whether dues-paying relationships should be continued.

The Rural Sociological Society has representation in the following organizations:

Table 2. Affiliate and Kindred Organizations

Name	Number of Reps	Term	How (S)electd?	Annual Dues (as of 09/2019)
American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)	1 – Chair	3 years	Appointed by RSS President	
AAAS Section O: Agriculture	1	3 years	Appointed by RSS President	
AAAS Section K: Social, Political, and Economic Science	1	3 years	Appointed by RSS President	
AAAS Section X: Societal Impacts of Science and Engineering	1	3 years	Appointed by RSS President	
Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA)	2	Coincides with Terms of Incumbents	President and Executive Director/Treasurer as Governing Members	Yes; \$880.00
Council of Professional Associations of Federal Statistics (COPAFS)	1	3 years	Appointed by RSS President	Yes; \$800.00
Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST)	1		RSS representative appointed by President (nominations from SAFRIG)	Yes; \$1,500.00
International Rural Sociological Association (IRSA)	3	4 years	Elected by General Membership, every three years	Yes; \$1,000 as full & governing members
Societies Consortium on Sexual Harassment in STEMM (w/ AAAS, AGU, AERA, AAMC, etc.)	1	None set	Liaison appointed by RSS President	Yes; \$500.00

The responsibilities of the Liaisons to Affiliate and Kindred Organizations are to:

1. Attend the meetings of the affiliate organization to which they are appointed to the extent reasonable and feasible.

2. Work to increase the visibility of the Rural Sociological Society in that organization at the meetings and throughout the year.
3. Nominate RSS members for national and international awards conferred by that organization and others when appropriate.
4. Work to increase the visibility of rural issues to that organization.
5. Inform the RSS Vice President, by way of a written report, the organization's activities and related tasks of the liaison.
6. Inform RSS membership of that organization's activities by making a written report to the Leadership Council. This report may be posted to the Society website and/or announced in an *RSS eBulletin*.
7. In the case of the Census of Agriculture, the Liaison is appointed from RSS to help coordinate a response with other affiliated organizations to the proposed changes in the census definition on farms and to publish a summary report to Council. This report may be posted to the Society website and/or announced in an *RSS eBulletin*.

As affiliate of the AAAS, the Society has made a number of specific commitments, including:

- Ensure that 20 subscriptions to *Rural Sociology* be donated for distribution to sub-Saharan universities through the AAAS journal distribution program.

Requests to Join Affiliate or Kindred Organizations

Research and Interests Groups (RIGs) and other collectives of RSS may submit a request to have RSS join an outside organization as an institutional member on their behalf, to advance the interests of their group and the organization more broadly using the Scientific Organization Membership Proposal Request form (Appendix G), which is fillable PDF. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the year.

The Executive Committee will assess the request, holistically, weighing both costs and benefits for the best of judgement using the criteria below:

- Alignment with the mission of RSS.
- Evidence of support among RIG members.
- Potential to enhance the work of RSS, including but not limited to, the research productivity of RIGs and/or their ability to engage with policymakers, the public, and other audiences.
- The likelihood that RSS members will take advantage of the potential value-added opportunity of an institutional membership.
- Costs, broadly defined to include costs of membership, the time needed to engage with the external organization, and the nature of the engagement itself.
- Controversies, potential harms, and other aspects of the organization that may lead some RSS members to object to an institutional membership.

A negative evaluation on a single criterion will not be an automatic disqualifying factor. The Executive Committee will produce a written recommendation that is submitted to Council for a vote to affirm, reject or request additional information. The application will be reviewed at the next Council meeting following receipt of an application. Any additional materials requested by Council will be provided by the Executive Committee and to the applicant by the RSS Executive Director. In instances when the request

is rejected, written justification for the decision will be provided. The applicant is advised to consult with Council before resubmitting the same request.

To date, requests for membership in outside organizations have been rare. In the future, if such requests increase in frequency, revisions to this policy (will) be considered including the inclusion of the Membership Committee in the evaluation and/or appeals process.

SECRETARY

The Secretary is elected by general election of the membership. The three-year term begins in the year the Secretary is elected with the second of two meetings of the RSS Leadership Council that wrap around the Annual Meeting. This is the meeting at which the new President first presides over the newly elected RSS Leadership Council.

The Secretary takes minutes of all meetings of the Executive Committee, Leadership Council, and annual Business Meeting of the Society. This is a minimum of twelve meetings during the Secretary's term of office. Although the term of office is three years, carry-over responsibilities extend beyond the last business meeting for which the secretary officially takes minutes. The Society will help defray the costs of the Secretary's travel to the RSS mid-year council meeting.

The responsibilities of the Secretary are broadly described in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Rural Sociological Society. These duties are described in more detail below.

The Secretary has the responsibility to:

1. Take comprehensive minutes at the RSS Leadership Council meetings that wrap around the RSS Annual Meeting in the summer and the mid-year Council meeting for the 3 years of the term.
2. Receive electronically prior to or during the council meeting the written version of reports of RSS Committee Chairs made verbally to RSS Council. These can be incorporated into the minutes, especially in cases where the verbal report mirrors the written report.
3. Edit and electronically distribute the minutes to the Council for corrections and final approval. This approval occurs during the Council meeting following the meeting at which the minutes were taken. The minutes must be distributed to the Council members electronically prior to the meeting at which approval is requested, as soon as feasible, but no later than three weeks prior to the upcoming Council meeting. Minutes edited and distributed relatively quickly after the meeting can document and help Council members in recalling activities and tasks that must be completed prior to the next Council meeting.

It is advisable to distribute the minutes to the current President and Vice-President immediately after the meeting, even if they have not been edited, so that these minutes can inform committee chairs of what they had agreed to do at the Council meeting. Once the minutes have been approved and corrections made, the final version is retained as Society records by the RSS Business Office and the RSS Historian.

4. Write a summary of the minutes for posting on the Official RSS Website and, as feasible, in the *RSS eBulletin*. Generally, these minutes summarize the key points in reports given by committee chairs and key points in the discussion of the reports. Any motions and votes must be reported. This summary must be available following approval of the full minutes by Council and in time to meet relevant posting and publication deadlines.
5. Take minutes at the RSS General Assembly business meeting held at the annual meeting. These minutes are then edited and distributed at the business meeting the following year for corrections and approval by the RSS membership. The complete, corrected and approved version is archived in the Business Office as part of the Society's records and posted to the official RSS website.
6. Serve as a member of the Executive Committee of the Society to discuss financial issues of the society, review the Executive Director/Treasurer's Report, and make recommendations to the Council about financial issues, among other things.
7. Serve as co-signatory on all endowment accounts, along with the Executive Director/Treasurer.
8. Submit copies of the minutes and supporting documents to the RSS Historian.

9. Assume carry-over responsibilities as the outgoing secretary, including educating the incoming secretary about the tasks and responsibilities of the position. As the secretary reaches the end of the third term, he/she is responsible for editing the minutes for the last council meeting attended and distributing them to Council for review. Corrections to those minutes suggested by Council, final approval, and editing the approved minutes into summary form for online posting fall to the incoming secretary.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/TREASURER

The duties of the Executive Director/Treasurer shall be as outlined in the Bylaws of the Society. The Executive Director/Treasurer is an officer of the Society appointed by the President subject to ratification of the Council and works at their pleasure. The standard term of office of the Executive Director/Treasurer shall be three years and may be extended, reduced, or renewed subject to ratification by Council. According to the Bylaws, the Executive Director/Treasurer shall be the chief financial and fiscal officer of the Society. The Executive Director/Treasurer shall submit financial reports to the council. These reports shall be distributed to the membership via email and/or posting on the RSS website, <http://www.ruralsociology.org>. The Executive Director/Treasurer shall receive all incomes of the Society with the exception of those specifically excluded by the Council. The Executive Director/Treasurer shall be bonded, shall invest funds in secure accounts and shall see that an audit of financial records is made annually. The Executive Director/Treasurer shall not be a voting member of the RSS Council so as to avoid conflicts of interest in the affairs of the RSS.

As the primary “employee” of the Society, the Executive Director/Treasurer assumes an overall association management role and takes care of those things that do not logically or constitutionally fall to any particular officer or committee. The Executive Director/Treasurer does not unilaterally make policy for the Society, even though he/she is an Officer *Ex-officio* on all RSS Standing Committees, but rather pursues policy implementation and change through the RSS Executive Committee, the RSS Leadership Council, and the various RSS Standing Committees.

The Executive Director/Treasurer has four primary roles in support of the Society: Management of the RSS Business Office, Professional Communication, Meeting Management, and Fiscal Management.

Management of the RSS Business Office

The Executive Director/Treasurer is responsible for the operations of the RSS Business Office, including the selection, training, and supervision of the Business Office Personnel, including a Business Manager, the duties for which can be distributed among staff as the Executive Director/Treasurer deems appropriate.

The RSS Business Office conducts most of the daily transactions of the Society including membership and subscription fulfillment, fiscal record keeping and communications with both internal and external (including international) parties. The Business Office handles the daily relationships with the contracted Publisher that produces the journal *Rural Sociology* and other publication organs of the Society, provides updates for the RSS web manager to post, makes bank deposits, reconciles accounts, produces budgets and generally oversees the day-to-day business and relational functions of Society.

The Executive Director/Treasurer also serves as the fiscal agent for the annual meeting; the RSS Business office handles all registration activities for the annual meeting.

Professional Communications

The Executive Director/Treasurer and RSS Business Office provide access for RSS officers and members, as well as the public-at-large, to RSS activities and events, publications, and official communication outlets. Furthermore, the Executive Director/Treasurer and the RSS Business Office will be responsible for electronic distribution of time-sensitive information. As appropriate, time-sensitive information will be forwarded via the RSS listserv of members, made accessible via the RSS website, and/or compiled and distributed monthly as the *RSS eBulletin*. Job announcements will be posted on the Society’s webpage as they are received, and also posted in the *RSS eBulletin*. Additionally, the *eBulletin* will include announcements of conferences of interest to members, notices of new publications, member news, and other brief notes. The RSS Publications Committee will provide oversight of this publication.

Examples of other Professional Communications duties of the Executive Director/Treasurer include:

1. Assist Officers and Council in performing their duties, and/or assume their responsibilities as directed by the Officers and Council.
2. Keep officers and members aware of significant issues through verbal and written reports, website postings, email and other electronic communication, and other correspondence.
3. Maintain electronic communication with RSS members and officers in kindred societies,
4. Manage the Official Society Website, supervise and assist the Web manager, and provide oversight to other official communication media.
5. Assume marketing responsibilities and production of RSS promotional materials.
6. With guidance from the Executive Committee, negotiate contracts and agreements (including memoranda of understanding, grants and awards, and exchanges) with external entities that have business with the Society, such as publishers and other professional associations.
7. In collaboration with the Nominations Committee, conduct elections of officers, council members and committees.

Meeting Management

Meeting management duties of the Executive Director/Treasurer include securing bids from potential meeting venues, negotiating contracts, selecting alternate sites, and preparing meeting budgets for Council approval. Prior to the annual meeting, the Executive Director/Treasurer and RSS Business Office work with the RSS webmaster and the program chair to maintain the electronic proposal submission process, as well as develop, print and disseminate the final annual meeting program. The Executive Director/Treasurer and RSS Business Office supervise the meeting registration activities prior to and during the annual meeting and are responsible for on-site meeting management, including liaising with facility staff during all RSS meetings. Timeliness of the following functions is paramount:

1. Securing bids, drafting contracts, and estimating meeting budgets for future meetings should be completed in time for an initial review of the RSS Leadership Council by its first meeting at the annual meeting, with final approval to take place at the mid-year Council meeting.
2. Generally, site selection for a future meeting should be completed enough in advance (approximately 3 years) that a final decision can be made by the Council at the Annual Meeting.
3. Getting all materials to printers etc. to make sure that all is prepared for the smooth flow of the meetings.
4. Managing reimbursements.
5. Paying all bills associated with the annual meeting.

Fiscal Management

The Executive Director/Treasurer is the chief financial officer of the Society. Under supervision of the Executive Committee, the Executive Director/Treasurer is responsible for cash flow management and invests the accounts of the RSS according to a Council approved financial plan. In conjunction with the Executive Committee, the Executive Director/Treasurer develops the association budget and annual meeting budgets for Council approval. The Executive Director/Treasurer is responsible for submitting all financial reports to the RSS Council and membership on a semi-annual basis. The Executive Director/Treasurer provides advice to the RSS Council on all fiscal matters related to Society activities and provides counsel to RSS

officers, committees and Research and Interest Groups regarding the financial impacts of their actions. The Executive Director/Treasurer shall be bonded and a U.S. Citizen in order to provide an audit of financial records as part of the annual Federal Tax preparation and in compliance with U.S. statutes. The Executive Director/Treasurer is responsible for submitting all required reports to the IRS, the particular State in which the Business Office resides, and others as necessary and appropriate. The Executive Director/Treasurer acts as the registered agent of the Society (or designates someone who must be a resident of the State where the office is constituted) for filing the annual corporation report in March.

Furthermore, the Executive Director/Treasurer oversees Grant Administration, as appropriate. When grants are submitted, the Executive Director/Treasurer ensures that the language is consistent with Society policies and guidelines and that the proposed budget includes an amount for grant administration costs (indirect costs) that will be incurred by the Society. The Executive Director/Treasurer and Business Office also assist the recipients of grants in the administration process. The Executive Director/Treasurer coordinates with the lead project officer for the grant to ensure follow-up for reports and to meet the guidelines and deadlines of individual Foundations. The Executive Director/Treasurer acts as the focal point of the organization for external and internal business affairs.

Related responsibilities of the Executive Director/Treasurer include, but are not limited to:

1. Develop and update a financial plan for the Society under the direction of the Executive Committee for approval by Council.
2. Day-to-day money management and investment oversight for all RSS endowment accounts.
3. Serve as fiscal agent for all outside grants and contracts accepted by the Society.
4. Review and sign any contracts for external services (e.g., printing and postage for Society publications).
5. Sign the facility (Hotel and/or Convention Center) contract for the Annual Meeting and monitor and review all budgets and accounts for the Annual Meeting, recommending to Council for approval.
6. Provide semi-annual endowment and operations statements to the Executive Committee at the Mid-Year and Annual Meetings, specifically.
7. Certify the Fidelity Bonding capability and limits of financial liability of all Society Officers.
8. Prepare, file, and certify RSS state and federal tax returns.
9. Seek a second signature on all RSS accounts, as appropriate.

RSS Accounts and Budgeting

The Society, with oversight of the Executive Director/Treasurer, maintains a number of accounts, each with distinct management, investment, and/or transfer requirements. These are detailed below and samples of an annual statement of assets, liabilities, and net assets. Among the accounts managed by the Executive Director/Treasurer are:

- RSS Operations Account
- Research and Interest Groups Accounts
- Annual Meeting Account
- Restricted RSS Endowment Accounts
 - RSS Endowment Fund

- JEDI Scholars Travel Fund
- Fred Buttel Research Group Enrichment Fund
- Grants and Contracts Accounts
- Cash Management/Money Market Operations Accounts
- Rolling Account of Government-Backed Securities

RSS Operations Account

This refers to the funds received and disbursed for maintaining the daily membership services of the Rural Sociological Society. These funds will remain separate and constitute the main financial account of the Society. The amount of these funds is not to be mandated in the policies and procedures manual.

Dues received for Research and Interest Groups will be kept in separate, interest-bearing, restricted accounts, specifically, the **Research and Interest Groups Accounts**. Interest from these accounts will be transferred yearly to the RSS Operations account under grants administration for business office support of the research and interest groups.

As a matter of policy, the Executive Director/Treasurer, acting through the RSS Business Office, will be the only fiscal agent for the **Annual Meeting Account**. At the mid-year meeting of the RSS Leadership Council, the Executive Director/Treasurer will provide a profit and loss statement for presentation on the outcome of the previous year's Annual Meeting. For that same Council meeting, the Executive Director/Treasurer also will prepare a budget on the upcoming annual meeting for review and approval by Council. These same guidelines apply to regional or special meetings for which the Executive Director/Treasurer becomes the fiscal agent and/or is required to report to an external funding agency.

Whenever there is a deficit in the Annual Meeting budget, it is paid for out of the Operations' budget. Any surplus in the Annual Meeting budget can stay in the Annual Meeting Account to cover expenses for future meetings that may incur a deficit. Any Operations Account surplus can be moved to the Annual Meeting budget for the purpose of reducing the Annual Meeting registration fees.

The Rural Sociological Society has three **Restricted Endowment Accounts**: the **Rural Sociological Endowment Fund Account**; the **JEDI Scholars Travel Fund Account**; and the **Fred Buttel Research Group Enrichment Fund Account**. Present moneys in these three fund accounts, as well as designated donations received by these funds, will be kept in separate accounts. Interest earned, as well as realized gains from investment, will be credited separately to each of these accounts. The Executive Director/Treasurer will report the balance and the investment allocation of these funds to the Executive Committee and the Council at the midyear and Annual Meetings. The Executive Director/Treasurer will recommend to Council at its mid-year meeting an amount to be distributed by the JEDI Committee and Awards and Endowment Committee.

Grants and Contract Accounts

The Executive Director/Treasurer will maintain separate accounts for all outside Grants and Contracts approved by the RSS President and Leadership Council. The Executive Director/Treasurer will be the fiscal agent for all these accounts and report activity annually to the Executive Committee and the Council when requested, as well as at the mid-year and annual meeting of the Council. Interest, office expenses or overhead accrued from these accounts as indirect-cost revenues will be deposited in the RSS Operations Account under grants administration as an income item. All disbursements will follow the policies of the funding agency.

Money Management Policies

The **RSS Operations Account** will be maintained in a not-for-profit corporate interest-bearing checking account, cash management account with checking privileges, or equivalent, with a balance maintained to minimize finance charges. Such policies will also apply to the **Research and Interest Groups Accounts** and the external **Grants and Contracts Accounts**. The amount of funds and the level of disbursement activity will dictate the choice of account.

A **Cash Management/Money Market Operations Account** with check writing capability will be maintained in conjunction with the RSS Operations checking account. If at any time the checking account balance in the **RSS Operations Account** exceeds \$10,000 over projected expenses for a period of more than three months (and the funds are not already in a money market or cash management account), the Executive Director/Treasurer may transfer the balance of funds from the operations checking account into the RSS Money Market account if it is deemed advisable to do so by advice of the Executive Committee and brokers with whom RSS holds accounts.

Linked to the **RSS Operations Checking Account** and **Money Market Operation Account** will be a **Rolling Account of Government-Backed Securities** for the purpose of investments and income generation. If at any time the funds in the **Money Market Account** exceed \$25,000.00, the balance will be invested in government-backed securities. The Executive Director/Treasurer must notify and receive approval from the Chair of the Executive Committee that an investment is being made.

Any interest accrued from checking, money market and short-term notes linked to the **RSS Operations Account** will be treated as an income item in that account.

The Financial Plan for the Rural Sociological Society recommends a \$100,000.00 reserve for Operations above anticipated expenses for a fiscal year. Any funds beyond that amount would be transferred to the **RSS Endowment Account** and invested according to the guidelines for the proposed RSS Endowment investment plan outlined later in this Financial Plan and distributed according to the recommendations of the RSS Awards and Endowment Committee with approval of the RSS Council.

If on November 30 annually, the combined amount in the **Money Market Operations Account** and the short-term operations investment in the **Rolling Account of Government- Backed Securities** exceeds \$150,000.00 (above anticipated yearly disbursements), the Executive Director/Treasurer will notify the Chair of the Executive Committee and request that the RSS Council approve a transfer of funds to the RSS Endowment Fund. Such approval will be acquired via electronic ballot or teleconference with documentation.

For accounting purposes, all funds in the **RSS Research and Interest Groups Accounts** shall be considered assets of the Society. However, these funds will not be expended without documented approval of the Chair of the RIG to which these funds have been contributed. Should a RIG disband, the RIG members shall decide how to dispose of funds remaining in their account. Should the RIG members fail to make such a decision, the funds will be deposited with the RSS Endowment Fund.

Guidelines for Distribution of Endowment Funds

Socially Responsible Investing

The RSS Endowment Funds are the main source of funds for the promotion of the goals of the Rural Sociological Society as outlined in the original motion by Council that established the fund. It shall be the practice of RSS to place half its Endowment Funds in mutual funds that are considered “socially responsible.” These funds should use, at a minimum, screening criteria that eliminate from their fund holdings companies that produce tobacco or tobacco-related products, harm the environment, discriminate against or otherwise mistreat workers, or manufacture weapons.

RSS Endowment Funds

At the mid-year Council meeting, the Executive Director/Treasurer of the RSS will recommend to the Executive Committee and Council an amount from the RSS Endowment Funds Accounts for distribution by the RSS Awards and Endowment Committee. The Awards and Endowment Committee will recommend to Council how the RSS Endowment Funds should be distributed, including the recommended amount for distribution and rebalanced principal, and transfers from operations account. Amounts earned exceeding this percentage will be added to the corpus/principal.

JEDI Scholars Travel Funds

Amounts from this endowment account will be distributed each year as recommended by the JEDI Committee to applicants to attend the Annual Meeting. The JEDI Scholar Travel Award includes a two-year membership.

Consequently, the Executive Director/Treasurer will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee and the Council for approval.

The Fred Buttel Research Group Enrichment Fund

Special consideration will be given to investing the corpus of this fund in those socially responsible investments which screen for environmental issues. The Fred Buttel Award will be available annually to support RSS Research Groups that function to promote environment-related research in their respective areas. The Awards and Endowment Committee will be responsible for recommendations regarding the distribution of these funds and related procedures. The recommended amount for distribution will be no less than six percent of the corpus (net of contributions, annually re-priced and rebalanced principal).

Life-time Memberships²

All receipts from the payment of Lifetime Memberships shall be placed in an unrestricted investment account and invested in a socially responsible mutual fund. Five percent (5 %) of the account's value at the close of the fiscal year shall be allocated to the upcoming fiscal year's operations budget and the balance of the value of the account re-invested. This procedure, in essence, endows the Lifetime Membership monies.

² RSS Discontinued offering Lifetime Memberships in January 2017.

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE SOCIETY

There shall be eight standing committees of the Society — the Awards and Endowment, Development, JEDI, Ethics, Membership, Nominations, Program, and Publications. Additionally, the Society recognizes Research and Interest Groups (RIGs), which are coordinated through the Research and Interest Group Standing Committee, which is comprised of the RIG chairs and Chaired by the Vice-President. The elected chairs of the RIGs serve on the standing Program Committee.

The Society's standing committees are responsible to Council for both policy recommendations and program activities. As a volunteer-based society, the Society relies on committee members for the work necessary to accomplish the Society's goals.

Committees will receive a "charge" each year from the President (generally in August) regarding the tasks considered necessary and appropriate for accomplishment in the coming year. This agenda setting typically occurs in the second meeting of the Council at the conclusion of the annual meeting. In addition, the Standing Committees may initiate recommendations to Council for changes in formal policy (Constitution and Bylaws), changes in operating procedures (this Manual), or program initiatives and plans to be carried out. Recommendations may include amendments to the fiscal year operations budget of the Society to make sure there are sufficient funds to accomplish the work planned. Such recommendations require Council approval when they include activity costs that exceed RSS budget allocations. Research Interest Group (RIG) activities that are funded separately are not affected by this provision.

Chairs-elect of the Awards and Endowment, Development, JEDI, Membership, and Publications Committees shall be appointed by the President, in cooperation with the President-elect, from the five newly elected and appointed members of Council. These are three-year appointments to the respective standing committee. After serving the first of the three years as Chairs-elect, the incumbents automatically ascend to Chair of their respective standing committee for the one-year period corresponding to the President-elect's term of office as President. In the third year, each serves as a voting member of their standing committee, despite the expiration of their term on Council, to help assure a smooth transition of leadership for the standing committees. To the greatest extent feasible, the recommended appointees for standing committee Chairs-elect should have had prior service on the Committee, preferably in the year immediately prior to when their appointment as Chair takes effect.

The Chair of the Nominations Committee shall be elected by the membership in the Society's annual elections. And the Chair of the RIGs standing committee is the Vice- President.

Except as otherwise specified herein, each Standing Committee shall have a minimum of six voting members. Members consist of a Committee Chair and Chair-elect, three active or emeritus members, and one student representative. With the exception of the student representative, committee members will serve three-year staggered terms. Student members serve up to two-year terms and are appointed by the President-elect and/or President based on recommendations from the Graduate Student Representative on Council(s), as well as nominations and volunteers solicited from among the membership. As needed, Committee Chairs may expand the committee membership by inviting ad hoc members to serve on special projects for one-year terms. Should a member resign from the committee to which they were appointed, the President-elect may appoint a replacement as necessary. To maintain continuity of leadership, the President-elect, along with the just elected President elect, designates the Chair-elect of each standing committee in the spring/summer of each year. The just elected President-elect participates in this decision because the standing committee chairs will serve as chairs during the just elected President-elect's term in office.

Newly elected Council members and Committee Chairs and Chairs-elect will officially assume their responsibilities immediately after the RSS business meeting that takes place at the Annual Meeting. New

Chairs should coordinate with their predecessors regarding the conduct of the committee meeting and mutually decide how to handle the unofficial transfer of responsibilities.

Procedure for Appointing Student Representatives to Standing Committees

Student representatives to Council will solicit student volunteers to serve on standing and ad hoc committees of the Society. In the event there are not enough volunteers for committee assignments, volunteers will be solicited from among the members, including both nominations and self-nominations. The President-elect, in consultation with the president, will appoint student representatives to committees within one month of the Annual Meeting.

AWARDS AND ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

According to the Bylaws, the Awards and Endowment Committee shall organize and implement the Society's efforts to recognize and honor those persons whose diverse efforts have enhanced the field of rural sociology and/or improved the conditions of rural people and places. The Society supports scholarship and practice to improve the quality of rural life through the distribution of funds from the Endowment. Each year, one new member of this Committee shall be a newly elected at-large Council member; that Council member shall serve as Chair of the Committee in his/her second year of service.

The Awards and Endowment Committee is responsible for administering the Society Awards and the Endowment Awards. To distribute the workload, the Awards and Endowment Committee is comprised of two sub-committees: the Society Awards Subcommittee and the Endowment Awards Subcommittee. The Chair of the Awards and Endowment Committee serves as the Chair of the Society Awards Subcommittee, and the Chair-elect of the Awards and Endowment Committee serves as the Chair of the Endowment Subcommittee. Subcommittee co-Chairs are selected via an informal election held within the subcommittee to serve one year in that position.

Because the Awards and Endowment Committee is comprised of two subcommittees, the Committee shall have a minimum of ten voting members. Members consist of a Committee Chair, a co-Chair, three active or emeritus members per subcommittee, and one student representative per subcommittee. With the exception of the student representatives, committee members will serve three-year staggered terms. Student members serve one- year terms and are appointed by the President-elect.

Responsibilities of the Chair of the Awards and Endowment Committee

1. Coordinate activities of the two subcommittees.
2. Prepare and present the Awards and Endowment Committee report to the RSS Leadership Council at their mid-year meeting and at the meeting that immediately precedes the Society's annual meeting.
3. Monitor, as appropriate, Subcommittees' conduct pursuant to the Conflict of Interest Policy.
4. Ensure that nominees for awards have not violated any part of the RSS Code of Ethics.
5. With the assistance of the RSS Business Office, oversee development and printing of the awards banquet program, which identifies award recipients and provides their background information.
6. Host the Awards Ceremony at the Society's Annual Meeting.
 - a. The Chair or another RSS member who nominated the award winner announces the award, the award winner, and provides brief background information.
 - b. The Chair provides the plaque or the certificate to the RSS President who presents it to the awardee so photos may be taken.
 - c. Awardees may make brief informal remarks, not to exceed 5 minutes in length.
 - d. The recipient of the Distinguished Service to Rural Life award is the only awardee invited speak, with a formal presentation not to exceed 15 minutes in length.
 - e. Comments made at the Annual Meeting by the Distinguished Service to Rural Life recipient may be published in the *RSS eBulletin* and posted on the RSS website.

Conflict of Interest Policy

The Awards and Endowment Committee of the Rural Sociological Society (RSS) distributes significant funds to RSS members to support research and other activities. The integrity and effectiveness of these investments is essential to the mission of the RSS. To ensure fairness and transparency in the decision-making process, Society Award Subcommittee members and Endowment Awards Subcommittee members are expected to make their co- committee members aware of any potential conflict of interest related to the use of RSS funds, and to excuse themselves from subcommittee decisions in which they might directly or indirectly benefit.

For the purposes of this policy, a conflict of interest involves situations where:

- A subcommittee member has an application under consideration for a RSS Society or Endowment Subcommittee Award,
- A subcommittee member is asked to evaluate a proposal for a RSS Society or Endowment Subcommittee Award submitted by colleagues, advisors, or students from their own institution.

In the first instance, the subcommittee chair will excuse the committee member from reading or discussing any other applications submitted for the program to which they had also applied. In the second instance, upon the approval of the subcommittee chair, the subcommittee member may be asked to evaluate the substantive merits of applications submitted from other institutions, but will not review applications from their own institutions. The subcommittee member will be allowed to participate in the final ranking of proposals for funding, though they will not be allowed to comment on the merits of any proposals from their institution.

The Code of Ethics Policy

The names of all individuals selected by the Awards and Endowment Committee to receive awards shall be circulated to the entire RSS Council at least one month prior to announcement or notification, with an invitation for council members to provide to the Ethics Committee any knowledge of behavior that violates our code of ethics. If concerns are raised within one month of receipt, the Ethics Committee will investigate and will contact the Chair of the Awards and Endowment Committee to delay announcement of the relevant award until the investigation is concluded. If concerns are determined to be credible, the Ethics Committee will make the final determination of whether those individuals will be nominated or awarded.

The Society Awards Subcommittee of the Awards and Endowment Committee

The Society Awards Subcommittee is responsible for administering, or recognizing and announcing*, the following awards:

- Distinguished Service to Rural Life Award
- Margaret Hagood Distinguished Rural Sociologist Award
- Excellence in Research Award
- Excellence in Instruction Award
- Minnie Miller Brown Excellence in Extension and Public Service Award
- Olaf Larson Graduate Student Paper Award
- Excellence in Service to the Rural Sociological Society

- Frederick H. Buttel Outstanding Scholarly Achievement Award
- The Rural Sociology Best Paper Award*
- Research and Interest Group Awards*

* The Award and Endowment Committee recognizes and announces these awards, but does not administer these awards.

The Society Awards Subcommittee is not responsible for nominating persons for awards, but it is responsible for encouraging RSS members to nominate persons who are eligible. Typically, there is one recipient per year for each award but there are situations wherein more than one person could receive the same award per year. The guidelines for the three excellence awards (research, instruction, and extension and public service) will permit multi-person excellence awards in cases where long-standing collaboration has been involved. The Society Awards Subcommittee has the discretion to move nominees, with consent from the nominator, from one category to another. The Society Awards Subcommittee must circulate the names of all individuals selected for awards to the entire RSS Council at least one month prior to announcement or notification, with an invitation for council members to provide to the Ethics Committee any knowledge of behavior that violates our code of ethics.

Responsibilities of the Chair of the Society Awards Subcommittee:

The responsibilities of the Chair of the Society Awards Subcommittee are presented in the following timeline. Any of these responsibilities may be delegated to other members of the Society Awards Subcommittee.

Table 3. Recommended Timeline for the Awards Subcommittee

July – August	• Attend pre-conference Council business meeting and present committee report. • Attend and Chair the Awards and Endowment Committee meeting at the annual meeting.
September-October	• Contact Subcommittee members and update the call for proposals
November	• Solicit nominations for the Society Awards through the monthly <i>RSS eBulletin</i>, RSS website, and RSS Listserv. Nominators are to submit a completed nomination packet that includes all materials to the Chair as an electronic file. • Notify all nominators of ‘live’ nominations from the past two years, to request a letter or memo from the nominator if they would like the nomination to be considered for the current year.
January	• Prepare committee report for RSS mid-year council meeting.
February	• Attend the RSS Midyear Council Meeting.
Third Monday in February	• Deadline for the submission of nominations.
March 15	• Send nomination packets to Subcommittee members for review.
April–May	• Conduct conference call(s) of the Subcommittee during which nominations are discussed. Monitor, as appropriate, Subcommittees’ conduct pursuant to the <i>Conflict of Interest Policy</i>.
May 1	• Final decisions made. • Send a list of proposed awardees to the RSS Council with an invitation for council members to provide to the Ethics Committee any knowledge of behavior that violates our code of ethics • Notify the winner of the Distinguished Service to Rural Life Award to allow for adequate time for planning.
June 1	• Notify all winners other than Distinguished Service to Rural Life Award.

	Notify those who made nominations as to the disposition of their nomination and to encourage those who made an unsuccessful nomination to consider re-nominating the next year. Nomination packets need to be passed to the next chair. A nomination is “live” for three years. It can be re-activated with a simple letter or memo by the nominator to the chair of the Subcommittee requesting that the nomination be considered in the current year’s pool. The Chair should inquire as to whether any updates are necessary for the nomination packet.
June 1	- Make arrangements for the recipient of the Distinguished Service to Rural Life Award to attend the Annual Meeting and to make 10-15 minutes of comments at the annual Awards Ceremony. RSS pays for travel, lodging, and one banquet ticket for the recipient from Annual Meeting receipts (the number of banquet tickets is flexible). RSS policy is to provide travel funds to the Distinguished Service to Rural Life Award winner but not to other award winners who are members of the Society. - Notify the RSS Executive Director of the name of the winner of the Graduate Student Paper Competition so that a check is available at the meeting for the recipient. This award includes a \$300 prize, 3 nights lodging at the annual RSS conference, and one-year membership in RSS. - Notify the RSS Executive Director of the names and titles of other award winners - As feasible and time permits, notify the winners’ deans or supervisors acknowledging that the person is being honored by RSS. - Secure photos of the individual awardees for inclusion in the Annual Meeting Program. Prepare comments to be made about each recipient at the annual Awards Ceremony.
June 15	- Prepare the brochure highlighting the recipients of the annual RSS Awards for distribution at the annual awards ceremony. [NOTE: The program may be distributed digitally rather than in hard copy, ideally available through the conference app. If this brochure is being published by the Program Committee you will need to contact this program chair to determine time requirements. If the Subcommittee Chair is taking care of production at their institution, she/he should maintain receipts for reimbursement by the Executive Director. Otherwise, contact the Executive Director to seek guidance on publication.] The cost of printing this brochure is included in the annual allocation to the Subcommittee. - Coordinate with the Program Chair regarding the arrangements for and scheduling of the annual Awards Ceremony.
July 1	Prepare subcommittee report for RSS council meeting.
August	- Attend RSS council meeting. - Host the annual Awards Ceremony as part of the banquet. - Communicate with the RSS business office to ensure that the results of the annual Awards Ceremony are reported on the RSS website and in the September <i>RSS eBulletin</i>.

Awards Conferred by the Society Awards Subcommittee

Distinguished Service to Rural Life Award

Purpose: To recognize a person, organization, or collective who has made an outstanding contribution to the enhancement of rural life, rural people, or rural policy.

Eligibility and Intent: Nominees should be individuals, organizations, or collectives whose activities exemplify the goals of the RSS. Nominees may or may not be RSS members. This award is intended to recognize excellence in non-academic settings, such as a non- governmental organization, government agency, or private firm. When nominating someone for any award, nominators should consider whether the candidate meets the standards outline by the RSS Code of Ethics. RSS Award winners are expected to meet these standards: <https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Nomination Submissions:

- A cover letter from the principal nominator outlining the major contributions of the nominee.
- A biographic sketch of the candidate/organization.
- Two to four letters of support.
- Evidentiary materials: up to three examples (e.g., brochure, report, etc.) describing the nominees' contributions and/or project or program if nominee is an organization or collective.

The Distinguished Service to Rural Life Award recipient will be invited to make a brief presentation at the Awards Banquet at the Society's Annual Meeting. In addition to an engraved plaque, the award recipient will receive a lifetime RSS membership, two nights lodging, travel reimbursement, and one banquet ticket to the annual conference.

Margaret Hagood Distinguished Rural Sociologist Award

Purpose: To honor one or more RSS members who have made superior career contributions to the field of rural sociology through research, teaching, extension, public service, and/or public policy.

Eligibility and Intent: Awards are based on overall professional accomplishments in rural sociology. Competition will be Society-wide, but interest groups are encouraged to nominate candidates for each award. When nominating someone for any of the following awards, nominators should consider whether the candidate meets the standards outline by the RSS Code of Ethics. RSS Award winners are expected to meet these standards: <https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Nomination Submissions:

- A cover letter from the principal nominator outlining the member's qualifications for the award.
- A current version of the nominee's CV.
- Two to four letters of support.
- Optional supporting materials: selected publications, student or peer evaluations, and other professionally relevant materials.

Excellence in Research Award

Purpose: To recognize a RSS member who has made outstanding contributions to rural- oriented research and/or theory.

Eligibility and Intent: Contribution of nominee to substantive area of rural-oriented research and/or theory should be emphasized. Competition will be Society-wide, but interest groups are encouraged to nominate candidates for each award. When nominating someone for any of the following awards, nominators should consider whether the candidate meets the standards outline by the RSS Code of Ethics. RSS Award winners are expected to meet these standards: <https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Nomination Submissions:

- A cover letter from the principal nominator detailing the member's qualifications for the award.
- A current version of the nominee's vita.
- Two to four letters of support.
- Evidentiary materials: up to three examples (e.g., publication, report) of the nominee's research.

Excellence in Instruction Award

Purpose: To recognize outstanding rural-oriented teaching by a RSS member at the graduate and/or undergraduate level.

Eligibility and Intent: Innovation in teaching and learning should be emphasized. Innovation may relate to a particular course, thematic area, population of students or pedagogical approach or technique. Evidence of impact should be provided. Competition will be Society-wide, but interest groups are encouraged to nominate candidates for each award. When nominating someone for any of the following awards, nominators should consider whether the candidate meets the standards outlined by the RSS Code of Ethics. RSS Award winners are expected to meet these standards: <https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Nomination Submissions:

- A cover letter from the principal nominator detailing the member's qualifications for the award.
- A current version of the nominee's vita.
- Two to four letters of support (at least one letter from another faculty member and one from a student).
- Evidentiary materials: up to three examples (e.g., syllabus, website, teaching evaluations, learning assessments, assignment) that support the case for instructional excellence.

Minnie Miller Brown Excellence in Extension and Public Outreach Award

Purpose: To honor an RSS member, working at a university or college, who has made significant contributions to extension and public outreach.

Eligibility and Intent: This award is intended to recognize public service excellence in academic settings. Excellence centers on having made a significant impact on rural residents, rural life, and/or rural policy. A specific program or area of outreach or extension should be highlighted. Competition will be Society-wide, but interest groups are encouraged to nominate candidates for each award. When nominating someone for any of the following awards, nominators should consider whether the candidate meets the standards outline by the RSS Code of Ethics. RSS Award winners are expected to meet these standards: <https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Nomination Submissions:

- A cover letter from the principal nominator detailing the member's qualifications for the award.
- A current version of the nominee's vita.
- Two to four letters of support.
- Evidentiary materials: up to three examples (e.g., brochure, 1-2 page summary) describing the project or program.

Olaf Larson Graduate Student Paper Award

Purpose: To enhance the involvement of graduate students in the RSS annual meeting, and to support their professional development, an award for the best graduate student paper submitted for the Annual Meeting will be presented each year by the Society. Presentation of the paper will take place as a special feature of one of the scheduled paper sessions.

Eligibility and Requirements: To be eligible, papers must be authored by graduate students who are members of the Society. In multiple authored papers, all authors must be graduate students, although only the first author must be a member of the RSS. By graduate student we mean an individual who holds graduate-student membership in the RSS; this requires certification of graduate-student status by a faculty advisor. (The papers may not be co-authored by a faculty member.) The papers must be submitted to the Program Committee by the due date specified for all papers, and it obviously must be accepted for presentation at the RSS annual meeting in the year the award is made. Papers should be of normal journal article length and format (12 pt font, double-spaced, 20-30 pages inclusive).

Masters theses and dissertations will not be considered.

When nominating someone for any award, nominators should consider whether the candidate meets the standards outlined by the RSS Code of Ethics. RSS Award winners are expected to meet these standards: <https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Criteria: Papers will be evaluated on the basis of commonly accepted professional criteria: theoretical grounding, appropriate methodologies, and adequacy of supporting evidence, clarity in thought and writing, and contribution to the discipline.

Award: The award includes a \$300 prize, 3 nights lodging at the annual RSS conference, and one-year membership in RSS.

Nomination Submission:

- One electronic copy of the completed paper.
- A current version of the author's vita.
- A letter from the author's faculty advisor or department chair certifying graduate student status.

Excellence in Service to the Rural Sociological Society Award

Purpose: This award recognizes an RSS member (or members) who have provided outstanding service and selfless effort beyond the call of duty in a singular area of effort on behalf of the Society.

Eligibility and Requirements: When nominating someone for a Certificate of Appreciation, nominators should consider whether the candidate meets the standards outline by the RSS Code of Ethics. RSS Award winners are expected to meet these standards: <https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Nomination Submission:

- A cover letter from the principal nominator outlining the specific outstanding service provided by the member.
- Two letters of support.

Frederick H. Buttel Outstanding Scholarly Achievement Award

Purpose: The Frederick H. Buttel Outstanding Scholarly Achievement Award recognizes a member of RSS for a specific recent scholarly work in the form of a book or journal article (alternating years for each format) that demonstrates particular excellence in rural sociology in the same spirit as that exemplified by the late Fred Buttel.

Eligibility and Intent: The nominee must be a member of the Society. The Publication Committee solicits nominations for outstanding scholarly work that advances the field of rural sociological knowledge, alternating every other year between books and journal articles (annual meetings occurring in

even years should consider a journal article and annual meeting occurring in odd years should consider books). The work must have been published within two years of the nomination. When nominating someone for any award, nominators should consider whether the candidate meets the standards outlined by the RSS Code of Ethics. RSS Award winners are expected to meet these standards:

<https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Award: The award includes a \$300 prize.

Nomination Submission:

- A letter of nomination from the author, publisher, or other relevant source.
- A current version of the author's vita.
- A copy of the nominated article or book for review by the committee.

Recognizing the *Rural Sociology* Best Paper Award

The *Rural Sociology* Best Paper is determined by the Editor and Editorial Board of *Rural Sociology* in consultation with the RSS Publications Committee. The results are provided to the Awards and Endowment Committee for reporting at the Awards Ceremony.

When nominating someone for any award, nominators should consider whether the candidate meets the standards outline by the RSS Code of Ethics. RSS Award winners are expected to meet these standards:

<https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Recognizing Awards by Research and Interest Groups (RIGs)

Individual RIGS may provide special awards. The RIGS are encouraged to have information on the procedures for applying for these awards on their sections of the RSS website and for maintaining open lines of communication with the RSS Awards and Endowment Committee to ensure that any questions or issues are referred to the appropriate people.

RIG awards will still be awarded by the respective interest groups at their own meetings, but the names of persons who have received RIG awards will be mentioned by the chair of the Awards and Endowment Committee at the RSS Awards Ceremony and their names will be included in the RSS Awards brochure.

When nominating someone for any award, nominators should consider whether the candidate meets the standards outlined by the RSS Code of Ethics. RSS Award winners are expected to meet these standards:

<https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

The Endowment Awards Subcommittee of the Awards and Endowment Committee

The Endowment Awards Subcommittee is responsible for administering the four RSS grants award competitions listed below. While the Endowment Awards Subcommittee is not responsible for nominating persons for awards, it is responsible for encouraging RSS members to nominate persons who are eligible. The Endowment Awards Subcommittee will decide on the criteria for each award, the maximum size for a single award in each category, issue a call for applications, and set requirements for reporting. Multiple awards in each grant category may be given based on available funds. These grants will be made each year from interest earned from the RSS Endowment Funds and other sources, with the total amount determined each year by Council in consultation with the Executive Director. The RSS Endowment Awards Subcommittee, with the help of the RSS Executive Director, will allocate the funds in the form of grants to the respective universities of the recipients. The Secretary will be the co-signatory on all Endowment accounts with the Executive Director/Treasurer. And although final reports are

required of grantees, the Executive Director/Treasurer may not withhold funds from awardees to induce reporting at the project's conclusion. The Endowment Awards Subcommittee must circulate the names of all individuals selected for awards to the entire RSS Council at least one month prior to announcement or notification, with an invitation for council members to provide to the Ethics Committee any knowledge of behavior that violates our code of ethics.

- Master's Thesis
- Dissertation
- Early Career
- Lawrence Busch Award for Graduate Student Research on Food and Agriculture

These grants are open to RSS members only. The **Master's Thesis Grant**, the **Dissertation Grant**, and the **Busch Award** are designed to promote and enhance research leading to a degree by students working in substantive areas relevant to rural sociology. The **Early Career Grant** is designed to promote and enhance the professional growth of rural sociologist members who received their postgraduate degrees within the last five years. This nominee would normally be a PhD, but it could also include practitioners with a Master's degree. Proposals by individuals would be funded to support teaching, research, or the application of rural sociology.

Responsibilities of the Chair of the Endowment Awards Subcommittee:

The responsibilities of the Chair of the Endowment Awards Subcommittee are presented in the following timeline. Any of these responsibilities may be delegated to other members of the Endowment Awards Subcommittee.

Table 4. Recommended Timeline for the Endowment Awards Subcommittee

July – August	• Attend pre-conference Council business meeting and present subcommittee report. • Attend the Awards and Endowment Committee meeting at the annual meeting.
September-October	• Contact Subcommittee members and update the call for proposals
November	• Solicit nominations for the Endowment Awards through the monthly <i>RSS eBulletin</i>, RSS website, and the RSS Listserv. Nominators are to submit a completed nomination packet that includes all materials to the Chair as an electronic file.
December 31	• Notify RSS Executive Director of the Endowment Subcommittee awards recipients to be recognized at the Awards Ceremony
January	• Contribute to committee report for RSS mid-year council meeting.
February	• Participate in the RSS Midyear Council Meeting.
Third Monday in February	• Deadline for the submission of nominations.
March 15	• Send nomination packets to Subcommittee members for review.
April–May	• Conduct conference call(s) of the Subcommittee during which nominations are discussed. Monitor, as appropriate, Subcommittees' conduct pursuant to the <i>Conflict of Interest Policy</i>.

May 1	• Final decisions made. • Send a list of proposed awardees to the RSS Council with an invitation for council members to provide to the Ethics Committee any knowledge of behavior that violates our code of ethics
June 1	• Notify all winners. • Secure photos of the individual awardees for inclusion in the Annual Meeting Program. Prepare comments to be made about each recipient at the annual Awards Ceremony.
June 15	• Prepare the brochure highlighting the recipients of the annual RSS Awards for distribution at the annual awards ceremony. [NOTE: The program may be distributed digitally rather than in hard copy, ideally available through the conference app. If this brochure is being published by the Program Committee you will need to contact this program chair to determine time requirements. If the Subcommittee Chair is taking care of production at their institution, she/he should maintain receipts for reimbursement by the Executive Director. Otherwise, contact the Executive Director to seek guidance on publication.] The cost of printing this brochure is included in the annual allocation to the Subcommittee. • Coordinate with the Program Chair regarding the arrangements for and scheduling of the annual Awards Ceremony.
July	• Contribute to the Committee report for RSS council meeting.
August	• Attend RSS council meeting. • Communicate with the RSS business office to ensure that the results of the annual Awards Ceremony are reported on the RSS website and in the September <i>RSS eBulletin</i>.

Guidance for Award Nominations by Members of the Society

The Society will solicit nominations for Society Awards and Endowment Awards via emails to members, announcements in the *RSS eBulletin*, and postings to the official RSS website. Complete instructions and forms for these nominations will be provided online and in print form, upon request. Members have the option of submitting nominations online or mailing them to the Awards and Endowment Committee through the RSS Business Office.

The RSS Master's Thesis and Dissertation Research Award Competition

Purpose, Intent and Eligibility: Proposals are invited to conduct research on any topic encompassed by the field of rural sociology. The awards are designed to stimulate research that will help develop the careers of future rural sociologists and support the broader mission of the Rural Sociological Society. Graduate student members of the Rural Sociological Society are eligible to apply for master's thesis and Ph.D. dissertation research awards. Master's thesis awards can be made for up to \$2,500. Dissertation awards can be made for up to \$5,000. Proposals approved for funding may receive budget allocations below the requested amounts, based on availability of funds and recommendations of the Endowment Awards Subcommittee.

Nomination Submission:

1. A short cover letter that includes a paragraph explaining how the research will influence the applicant's future work related to rural sociology.
2. A proposal, including the budget and budget justification, not to exceed 10 double-spaced pages using a 12-point font and 1" margins. This proposal should include:
 - A well-defined problem statement,
 - An abbreviated literature review,
 - A section detailing research methods,

- A work-plan schedule,
 - An itemized budget for the planned work, and
 - A brief budget justification narrative that meets the following guidelines:
 - Equipment purchases are not permitted with Endowment funds.
 - Because of limited funds and the relatively small dollar total of awards, the RSS will not pay overhead charges to the host institution of the recipient.
 - The RSS Endowment Awards Subcommittee understands that individuals submitting proposals may seek additional funding from other sources. The committee requests that the budget narrative describe exactly which parts of the project would be supported by additional funds and which parts would be supported by RSS funds.
3. A copy of the applicant's CV.
 4. A letter from the student's major professor or thesis chair that addresses the project's intellectual significance and the likelihood that work on the thesis will be actively pursued during the academic year in which the award is made.

The RSS Early Careers Research Awards Competition

Purpose, Intent and Eligibility: Members of the Rural Sociological Society who received their Ph.D. in the last five years preceding the award date are eligible to apply for RSS Early Career Research awards. Proposals are invited to conduct research on any topic encompassed by the field of rural sociology. The awards are designed to stimulate research that will help develop the careers of future rural sociologists and support the broader mission of the Rural Sociological Society. The Early Career Research awards have previously been made for up to \$5,000. Because the size of these awards is modest, proposals will generally involve small-scale projects that will enhance opportunities for scholars to pursue expanded research efforts in the future. RSS award winners are expected to meet the standards outlined by the RSS Code of Ethics: <https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Nominations Submission

1. A short cover letter that includes a paragraph explaining how the research will influence the applicant's future work related to rural sociology.
2. A proposal, including the budget and budget justification, not to exceed 10 double-spaced pages using a 12-point font and 1" margins. This proposal should include:
 - A well-defined problem statement,
 - An abbreviated literature review,
 - A section detailing research methods,
 - A work-plan schedule,
 - An itemized budget for the planned work, and
 - A brief budget justification narrative that meets the following guidelines:
 - Equipment purchases are not permitted with Endowment funds.
 - Because of limited funds and the relatively small dollar total of awards, the RSS will not pay overhead charges to the host institution of the recipient.
 - The RSS Endowment Awards Subcommittee understands that individuals submitting

proposals may seek additional funding from other sources. The committee requests that the budget narrative describe exactly which parts of the project would be supported by additional funds and which parts would be supported by RSS funds.

3. A copy of the applicant's CV.

Lawrence Busch Award for Graduate Student Research on Food and Agriculture

Purpose, Intent, and Eligibility: The Lawrence Busch Award for Graduate Student Research on Food and Agriculture supports research with a focus on food and agriculture. The awardee shall be a member in good standing of the RSS at the time of the award. The recipient of this award shall engage in social research on issues related to food and/or agriculture. The award shall be available to anyone without regard to nationality or citizenship. The awardee need not be a sociologist, but must be someone with a strong and demonstrable interest in social issues surrounding food and agriculture. The research may be of domestic or international relevance and shall have been approved by the appropriate offices of the student's institution. The award is designed to stimulate research that will help develop the careers of future rural sociologists and support the broader mission of the Rural Sociological Society. Award winners are strongly encouraged to submit papers based on their research at future RSS Annual Meetings. Only one award can be awarded per year, regardless of the availability of funds. The amount granted will be no more than \$1,500.00 and may be less depending on the availability of funds. The award shall be given directly to the recipient and not to any institution. RSS award winners are expected to meet the standards outlined by the RSS Code of Ethics: <https://www.ruralsociology.org/rss-ethics>.

Nominations Submission:

1. A short cover letter which includes paragraph explaining how their thesis/dissertation/research will influence the applicant's future work related to food and agriculture.
2. The proposal, including the budget and budget justification, is limited to no more than 5 single-spaced pages of the research to be undertaken using a 12-point font and 1-inch margins. The applicant should include an itemized budget and a brief budget narrative. References are not included in the 5-page limit. The proposal should include:
 - A well-defined problem statement,
 - An abbreviated literature review,
 - A section detailing research methods,
 - A work-plan schedule,
 - Plans for dissemination of findings,
 - An itemized budget for the work planned, and
 - A brief budget justification narrative that meets the following guidelines:
 - Equipment purchases are not permitted with Endowment funds.
 - Because of the limited funds and the relatively small dollar total of awards, RSS will not pay overhead charges to the host institution of the recipient.
 - The RSS Endowment Committee understands that individuals submitting proposals may seek additional funding from other sources. The committee requests that the budget narrative describe exactly which parts of the project would be supported by additional funds and which parts would be supported by the Busch Award.
2. A short CV of no more than three pages.

3. Proposal packets submitted for the Lawrence Busch Graduate Student Research Award on Food and Agriculture must also include a letter from the student's major professor or thesis/dissertation chair that addresses the project's intellectual significance and the likelihood that work on the thesis/dissertation will be actively pursued during the current academic year.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

According to the Bylaws, the Development Committee shall be concerned with the status and development of rural sociology and the Society.

The Development Committee has a minimum of six voting members, including the Chair, Chair-elect, three active or emeritus members, and one student representative. The Chair-elect is appointed for a one-year term by the RSS President-elect, ascends to Chair in the second year, and remains on the Development Committee in the third year to provide institutional memory and aid the smooth transition of leadership. In addition to the appointed members, the President and President-elect shall serve as ex-officio members of this committee.

This committee focuses on policies and procedures of the Society. The Committee shall conduct deliberations and develop recommendations, as directed by the President or the Council, and it may also initiate its own recommendations for the good of the Society.

In this way, the Development Committee members serve in an advisory capacity to the Executive Committee and the RSS Leadership Council. The Development Committee is considered the think tank of the society, cutting across and transcending the functions of other committees in order to provide more conceptual and strategic guidance regarding an issue or issues other committees are dealing with in concrete ways. The Development Committee guides the Council in developing a framework of inquiry regarding a strategic planning process for the Society and outlines the means for getting feedback from members (usually through email correspondence) throughout the year.

The Development Committee periodically re-examines the form of RSS representation to all Affiliate and Kindred Organizations and makes recommendations to Council whether dues-paying relationships should be continued.

The Development Committee Chair also plays a key role in recommending potential members to the President. Although the tasks taken on each year by the Development Committee may continue the work of previous administrations, they represent the mandates of the current President.

In its review of RSS activities, the development committee will consult with the Past-President's about his/her annual review of the RSS Policy and Procedures manual.

JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (JEDI) COMMITTEE

The JEDI Committee seeks to assist the Rural Sociological Society in creating a more inclusive and supportive environment, in order to promote the participation and engagement of individuals and groups underrepresented in the Society, including across diverse races, ethnicities, gender identities, sexual orientations, physical or mental abilities, and religions. In so doing the committee aims to help redress historical inequities, to create inclusive spaces where all members can think critically and thrive, and to produce stronger, more engaged scholarship. The Committee works to promote and advance equity, diversity, and inclusion, and to support the growth and development of underrepresented scholars through a number of mechanisms, including through programming efforts, policy recommendations to the RSS Leadership Council, and by administering the JEDI Travel Fund.

The JEDI Committee has a minimum of six voting members, including the Chair, Chair-elect, three active or emeritus members, and one student representative. The Chair-elect is appointed for a one-year term by the RSS President-elect, ascends to Chair in the second year, and remains on the JEDI Committee in the third year to provide institutional memory and aid the smooth transition of leadership.

Duties of the Chair of the RSS JEDI Committee

Required Activities

1. Prepare and present the JEDI Committee Report to the RSS Leadership Council at their mid-year meeting and at the meeting that immediately precedes the Society's annual meeting.
2. Lead JEDI Committee in facilitating opportunities to include, support and learn from historically underrepresented groups in the Society. These opportunities should include:
 - Select a JEDI Committee representative to serve as an Ex Officio member on the Nomination Committee, in order to support diversity, justice, inclusion and decision-making power in RSS leadership among groups who have been historically marginalized.
 - Select a JEDI Committee member to support the RSS President and Conference Planning Committee in the development of a Land Acknowledgement, Land Statement, or other activities that support the visibility and honor the history of Native Nations and Indigenous Peoples from the geography of the annual meeting.
 - Select a member of the JEDI Committee to serve as a representative on the Membership Committee, with the explicit task of helping to prepare an annual JEDI Report to present to the RSS Leadership Council during Council deliberations at the annual meeting. At a minimum, the report should document general RSS membership and Council/committee membership data, including race and gender, international members, non-land grant university members, and non-academic members, in order to keep track of measures of diversity and inclusion.

- Facilitate opportunities at the annual meeting for ***community building among historically marginalized groups***.
 - Work with the RSS Leadership Council and the Program Committee to host the annual Diversity Reception at the annual meeting.
 - Additional opportunities could include affinity groups (places of belonging, empowerment), facilitating mentoring opportunities, etc.
- Organize the annual Silent Auction, with funds then appropriated to the JEDI Travel Award.
- Allocate JEDI Travel Award funds to applicants as stipulated below.
- Review and revise policies to promote and encourage real power and voice in decision making, particularly for those who have been historically underrepresented in the RSS, as needed.

Additional activities of the JEDI Committee can include:

3. Developing workshops or panel discussions at the annual meeting that aim to educate the RSS membership on topics and issues related to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, and/or support RSS members from historically marginalized groups in pursuit of their scholarship, creative activity, and career aspirations.
4. Supporting existing conference programming to ensure that diversity, equity, justice and inclusion are integrated. This work should be thought of structurally, to ensure that the conference programming is thoughtfully constructed to include voices and perspectives from historically marginalized communities.
5. Working with the RSS Leadership Council to encourage the ASA and regional associations to incorporate rural diversity and justice issues, and opportunities into their programming.
6. Disseminating information about RSS equity, justice, and inclusion initiatives to associations that represent individuals from historically marginalized communities, including PAWC (Professional Agricultural Workers Conference) and MANRRS (National Society for Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences).
7. Sharing information about issues and opportunities related to equity, justice, access, and inclusion of interest to members of the Society through the RSS eBulletin and the RSS website.
8. Supporting the RSS Council, other committees and/or RIGS in writing grant proposals and administering successful grant applications that advance the representation and development of underrepresented groups through the support of relevant research, mentorship, workshop, educational/informational outreach, and other programmatic activities that incorporate underrepresented groups more systematically into the life of the Society, or that allow the RSS membership to engage with and learn from historically underrepresented groups. Note: The JEDI Committee Chair will consult with the RSS President, Executive Director/Treasurer, and RSS Leadership Council for approval of ideas for any activities that will require external funding prior to submission of a proposal to a funding agency.

9. Periodically deploying a survey of the RSS membership in order to understand how well the RSS is meeting its goals with regards to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, and what ideas for programming and policy the broader membership has.

JEDI Travel Fund

The intent of the RSS Leadership Council is to enhance and support diversity and inclusion in the RSS by helping to facilitate participation of individuals from groups that have been historically underrepresented in the Society through provision of the JEDI Travel Awards. The JEDI Travel Fund is administered by the JEDI Committee. The JEDI Travel Fund is a donation-only account replenished on a yearly basis with no attempt to preserve principal from year to year. JEDI Travel Awards made from the Fund are distributed based on procedures in the RSS Financial Plan.

Up to \$500 and a two-year Society membership may be allocated to each selected applicant to participate in the Society and attend the annual meeting. Priority in award decisions shall be given to qualified individual applicants who have not previously been a recipient of this award, but an individual may receive this award more than once.

Priority for receiving funding will be extended to applicants from underrepresented groups—including student members—who:

1. Have limited institutional support for conference travel and/or may face other financial barriers to participation;
2. Have never attended a RSS annual meeting;
3. Can provide some evidence of the potential for contributing to RSS as an active member such as actively participating in the annual meeting via accepted paper/poster presentation or invited session presenter or discussant;
4. Serve historically marginalized populations and/or work at non-research I institutions;
5. Are newly employed; and,
6. Have applied in writing (or via e-mail) with explanation and justification.

The funds from this source may be combined with other forms of RSS support, such as a reduced registration fee for the annual meeting and/or a reduced RSS Membership rate.

Below is the application form for the JEDI Travel Award.

2024 JEDI Travel Award

The Rural Sociological Society (RSS) and the JEDI Committee are pleased to announce that travel awards are available to support the attendance and participation of members historically underrepresented in RSS at the annual conference to be held in Madison, Wisconsin. These awards will be awarded on a competitive basis and are meant to assist participants in defraying costs associated with attending the RSS meeting.

We anticipate granting awards at the minimum amount of \$300 per recipient; however, the amount of funds and the number of awards may fluctuate depending on the number of applications and the need described therein.

Eligibility and Application Requirements

To be eligible for the award, an applicant must be:

- An active participant of the meeting by presenting a paper, participating on a panel, or presenting a poster on research. We encourage applications from academics and non-academics.

In addition, for students:

- A student pursuing a degree relevant to rural studies in an academic institution.
- A student member of the Rural Sociological Society at the time of receiving the award.

To apply, an applicant must submit a completed Travel Award Application (see below)

Completed applications should be submitted via e-mail to Rebecca Som Castellano, rsomcastellano@boisestate.edu, no later than **Thursday, May 16th, 11:59 pm (MST)**.

The JEDI Committee will make selections and announce decisions by May 30th, 2024. No part of the application may be submitted by fax and only applications from individuals on their own behalf will be accepted.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Responsibilities and Authority of RSS Ethics Committee

The RSS Ethics Committee³ has been established by the RSS Council to promote ethical conduct of members, investigate complaints concerning the ethical conduct of members, and impose sanctions when a violation of the Code of Ethics has occurred.

Authority of RSS Ethics Committee

RSS Ethics Committee is authorized to:

1. Publicize the Code of Ethics to RSS membership.
2. Educate RSS members concerning their ethical obligations under the Code of Ethics.
3. Recommend to the RSS Council changes in the Code of Ethics and these Policies and Procedures.
4. Provide to individual members of RSS on an informal and confidential basis advice regarding their ethical obligations under the Code of Ethics.
5. Investigate allegations of unethical conduct by members of RSS, determine violations of the Code of Ethics, and seek to resolve complaints through informal (e.g., mediation) or formal (e.g., sanctions) means.
6. Adopt such rules and procedures governing the conduct of all matters within its jurisdiction as are consistent with the Bylaws of RSS, the RSS Code of Ethics, and related Policies and Procedures.
7. Provide to the RSS Executive Director and Council an annual written report of the committee's activities by December 31st of each year.

Operating Rules

Membership and Officers

1. The committee shall have five committee members. All committee members should be active members of the RSS while serving on this committee.
2. Three of these members will be elected by a vote of active RSS members. One new committee member shall be elected annually and will serve as chair-elect in their first year; he/she will serve a 3-year term, becoming chair in year 2 and past-chair in year 3.
3. One at-large member will be appointed each year by the President to serve a 1-year term.
4. One graduate student member will be appointed each year by the President to serve a 1-year term.
5. The Chair shall have the primary responsibility for carrying out the mandate of the RSS Ethics Committee.
6. After the end of his/her term of office, a member of RSS Ethics Committee should continue to participate in the investigation of any case to which he/she was previously assigned, and such

³ Established as an RSS Standing Committee by a vote by the RSS Membership to amend the RSS Bylaws on 07/28/2017.

member may participate in reaching the findings and recommendation of the investigation with respect to that matter.

Meetings

A regular meeting of the RSS Ethics Committee shall be held annually in connection with the annual RSS meeting. Additional meetings may be held, upon call of the Chair, in person or by video or teleconference.

Quorum and Voting

A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the annual RSS Ethics Committee shall consist of a majority of the members then in office. All decisions shall be by majority vote of the members present at a meeting.

Conflicts of Interest

Committee members should recuse themselves from deliberation over any complaints brought before the committee for which he/she has a conflict of interest, as defined in the Code of Ethics.

Enforcement of the RSS Code of Ethics

Jurisdiction

1. RSS Ethics Committee shall have jurisdiction to receive and determine any timely complaint of the violations of the RSS Code of Ethics by a current member of the RSS in any category of membership. In the event that a complainee resigns from the RSS subsequent to filing of a complaint against him or her, the RSS Ethics Committee shall have the discretion to resolve the complaint as if the complainee were still a member.
2. In the event that a complaint alleges conduct which is, or may be, the subject of other legal or institutional proceedings, RSS Ethics Committee may, in its discretion, defer further proceedings with respect to the complaint until the conclusion of the other legal or institutional proceedings.

Filing of Complaint

1. Any member or non-member of the RSS who perceives that an RSS member has violated an ethical standard may file a complaint with the chair or any member of the RSS Ethics Committee.
2. A complaint may be initiated by RSS Ethics Committee on its own behalf.
3. Initial consultation with the Chair of the RSS Ethics Committee is encouraged to clarify whether concerns about a possible ethical violation is covered by the Code.
4. A complaint shall include the name and address of the complainant; the name and address of the complainee; the provisions of the RSS Code of Ethics alleged to have been violated; a statement that other legal or institutional proceedings involving the alleged conduct have not been initiated, or, if initiated, the status of such proceedings; a full statement of conduct alleged
5. to have violated the Code of Ethics, including the sources of all information on which the allegations are based; copies of any documents supporting the allegations; and, if necessary, a request that the 18-month time limit be waived. Anonymous complaints shall not be accepted. Confidentiality shall be protected as described in Part V.5 below.

6. A complaint may not be accepted or initiated if it is received more than 18 months after the alleged conduct occurred or was discovered. A complaint received after the 18-month time limit set forth in this paragraph shall not be accepted unless the Chair of the RSS Ethics Committee determines that there is good cause for the complaint not to have been filed within the 18-month time limit. No complaint shall be considered if it is received more than five years after the alleged conduct occurred or was discovered.

Preliminary Screening and Notice of Complaint

1. The Chair of the Committee, in consultation with Committee members, shall screen each complaint to determine whether the complainee is a member of RSS and whether the alleged conduct is covered by the Code. If the complaint does not include the information required, the Chair of the Ethics Committee shall so inform the complainant, who shall be given the opportunity to provide additional information. If no response is received from the complainant within thirty days, the matter shall be closed and the complainant so notified.
2. If the complaint is complete and is covered by the Code, the Chair of RSS Ethics Committee shall consult with the other members of the Committee to evaluate whether there is cause for action. A majority vote of the committee is required to initiate a formal case. If the committee finds that a cause for action does not exist, the complaint shall be dismissed at this stage.
3. If sufficient cause for action is found, the Chair of the Committee shall notify the complainant and the complainee that the case shall go forward in accordance with these Policies and Procedures, and will provide both parties with a copy of the complaint and all supporting materials and a copy of the Code of Ethics and these Policies and Procedures.

Response to Complaint

1. The Chair shall notify the complainee that s/he shall have thirty days after receipt of this notice to respond in writing to the complaint. An extension may be granted by the Chair if good cause is shown, but that extension shall not exceed ninety days.
2. The response materials shall be submitted to the Chair of the RSS Ethics Committee. The Chair may, at his/her discretion, request additional information from the complainant, complainee, and/or any other appropriate source, provided, however, that the Committee shall not rely on such additional information unless it has been shared with both the complainee and the complainant and each party has been afforded an opportunity to respond.

Investigation and Notice of Determination

1. Once all information from the complainant and complainee is received by the Chair, s/he will provide copies of these materials to the members of the full RSS Ethics Committee, which shall investigate the complaint.
2. The Committee may communicate with the complainant, complainee, witnesses, or other sources as is practical through written correspondence or verbal communication.
3. Although complainant and complainee have the right to consult with attorneys, concerning all phases of the ethics process, the complainant must file and the complainee must respond to charges of unethical conduct personally and not through legal counsel or another third party, unless the complainant or complainee provides good cause as to why he or she cannot respond personally.
4. The RSS Ethics Committee shall determine whether a violation of the Code of Ethics has occurred on the basis of the complaint, the response, any other information provided to the

Committee, including the testimony of witnesses where in its view it is essential to the fairness of the proceedings.

5. Upon completion of its review RSS Ethics Committee shall make a determination of whether one or more violations of the Code of Ethics have occurred, including a summary of the factual basis for this determination, and recommend an appropriate sanction.
6. The Committee shall submit a written report (the Notice of Determination) including the results of their investigation and any recommendations for sanction to the RSS Executive Committee within ninety days of initiating the formal committee investigation, unless a longer period is necessary in the opinion of the Chair.
7. As soon as the Notice of Determination is sent to the RSS Executive Committee, the Chair of the RSS Ethics Committee shall provide the complainant and complainee with a copy of the Notice of Determination. The complainant and complainee may submit a response to the Notice of Determination in writing to the Chair of the RSS Ethics Committee within a time frame of not more than 14 days.
8. After the 14-day waiting period for responses from the complainant and complainee, the Chair of the RSS Ethics Committee will decide whether to:
 - Forward the **Notice of Final Determination** in its original form to the RSS Executive Director to take appropriate action to implement the recommendation, or
 - Return it to the RSS Ethics Committee with feedback for reconsideration.
9. If returned to the RSS Ethics Committee for reconsideration, the committee will have 10 days to issue a final recommendation in the form of a **Notice of Final Determination** to the RSS Executive Director to take appropriate actions to implement the recommendation.

Appeals

1. A complainee who is found in the Notice of Final Determination to have violated the RSS Code of Ethics and who receives a sanction, or a complainant who feels the Notice of Final Determination inadequately addresses the complaint or identifies insufficiencies in the process, may formally appeal this determination by filing a Notice of Appeal and Statement of Reasons with the RSS Executive Director no later than thirty days after the receipt of the Notice of Final Determination.
2. If an appeal is filed, the RSS Executive Committee shall appoint a three-member Appeal Panel consisting of past members of the RSS Ethics Committee to review all information considered by the Ethics Committee and, within ninety days, make a final determination as to whether or not all available information has been considered and due process has been followed by the Ethics Committee.
3. The Appeal Panel may either (i) reaffirm or (ii) recommend specific changes to the Ethics Committee's Notice of Final Determination.
4. If they reaffirm the Ethics Committee Notice of Final Determination, this shall constitute the final decision of RSS.
5. Insofar as they recommend changes, the evidence and reasoning behind their recommendation should be summarized in writing and submitted to the full RSS Council for consideration. The RSS Leadership Council shall vote within 30 days of receiving this recommendation on whether (i) to accept the original Ethics Committee Notice of Final Determination, or (ii) to replace it with the Appeals Panel's changes. In this case, the vote of the RSS Council shall constitute the final decision of RSS.

Sanctions

Purpose of Sanctions

The purpose of sanctions for violations of the RSS code of ethics is to: 1) penalize the violator for his/her misconduct, 2) provide feedback to educate and rehabilitate individuals who violate the code of ethics, and 3) to create an environment of accountability in which RSS members can expect ethical behavior and violators of the code of ethics will be held accountable for misconduct.

Types of Sanctions

Private reprimand: In cases where the violation is minor in nature and/or did not cause serious personal and/or professional harm, a letter of reprimand, including any stipulated conditions, may be sent to the complainee. Failure to comply with stipulated conditions may result in the imposition of a more severe sanction.

Public censure: In the case of more serious ethical violations, a public censure may be issued to the full membership and to other parties concerning the violation, as appropriate.

Denial of privileges: In appropriate cases, sanctions may include denial of some privileges of RSS membership including, but not limited to: election or appointment to any RSS committees or offices, appointment to editorial boards of publications, serving as editor of any publications, receipt of awards, presenting or otherwise participating in any meetings of RSS, or receiving other assistance from RSS. When membership privileges are denied, membership dues will not be returned.

Suspension of membership: In cases in which the violation causes serious personal and/or professional harm, RSS membership and all privileges may be suspended for an appropriate period of time. Renewal of membership may be either automatic or provisional upon compliance with stipulated conditions. When membership privileges are suspended, membership dues will not be returned.

Revocation of membership: In cases in which the violation causes the most serious personal and/or professional harm, RSS membership and all privileges may be permanently revoked. When membership privileges are revoked, membership dues will not be returned.

Confidentiality

1. The filing of a complaint against an RSS member and all proceedings shall be kept confidential by the RSS Ethics Committee, the Appeal Panel, the RSS Executive Committee, the RSS Council, and the Executive Director of RSS prior to a final determination of the matter, except that information regarding the complaint may be shared with any staff designated by the Council to assist the Ethics Committee
2. and legal counsel. All parties involved in ethics investigations shall, to the greatest extent possible, make reasonable efforts to maintain confidentiality of other parties. Public reporting of the determination of violations of the Code of Ethics by RSS Ethics Committee or by an Appeal Panel shall be in accordance with the agreed upon sanction.
3. The RSS Ethics Committee will report to Council annually the number of complaints received and the resolution of those complaints, maintaining confidentiality as indicated by the outcomes of the complaints. Those complainees who have had sanctions which affect their privileges and membership with RSS will be identified in the reports and to the appropriate committee or office for action.

4. The Committee may disclose such information when compelled by a valid subpoena or by court order.
5. Initiation of legal sanction against the RSS or its officers or employees shall constitute a waiver of confidentiality by the person initiating such action.

Records relating to the investigation of complaints of violations of the Code, whether or not RSS Ethics Committee determined that a violation occurred, shall be maintained by the RSS Executive Director in a secure place indefinitely.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Membership Committee provides leadership in recruiting and retaining members and, in coordination with the JEDI Committee, shall seek ways to expand and diversify the membership base.

The Membership Committee has a minimum of six voting members, including the Chair, Chair-elect, three active or emeritus members, and one student representative. The Chair-elect is appointed for a one-year term by the RSS President-elect, ascends to Chair in the second year, and remains on the Membership Committee in the third year to provide institutional memory and aid the smooth transition of leadership.

Duties of the Chair of the Membership Committee include:

1. Work with the Membership Committee to analyze membership trends and propose strategic membership recruitment campaigns consistent with the results of analyses.
2. Work with the Membership Committee and the JEDI Committee Chair to develop and coordinate membership recruitment activities to increase membership in the Society.
3. Work with the Membership Committee and the Annual Meeting Program Committee Chair to promote attendance at the annual meeting.
4. Lead the Membership Committee in developing, updating, and maintaining materials to promote membership in the Society. Such materials include pamphlets, brochures and fliers, and the RSS display. It does not refer to areas that are the responsibility of the Publications Committee or materials related to promotion of the annual meeting.
5. Coordinate with the RSS Business Office printing and distribution of promotional materials as necessary.
6. In years when the RSS meets in the same location as the American Sociological Association or other affiliate professional societies, recruit Membership Committee members to staff the RSS display at these meetings.

It is the responsibility of the Membership Committee to prepare exhibits to display at various meetings and to specifically endorse displaying such exhibits at the AAAS meetings. The Society supports the necessary exhibitor fee up to \$175 plus necessary shipping and drayage costs in order to present RSS exhibits at the annual AAAS affiliate exhibit and the meetings of other affiliates. The Executive Director/Treasurer, with guidance from the Council, will direct the individual responsible for these exhibits.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The Nominations Committee recruits and nominates a slate of officers and leadership council members that will best serve the future of the Society and represent the diverse interests and background of the membership. The Nominations Committee has a minimum of six voting members, including the Chair, Chair-elect, two elected members, and one student member, plus two members appointed by the President/President-elect. The Chair-elect is elected annually to serve a two-year term, first serving as Chair-elect in the first year, and as Chair the second year. Two members of the committee are elected by the membership of the Society in the annual elections to serve one-year terms. The student representative is appointed by the President/President-elect. The JEDI Committee shall have a representative that serves as an Ex Officio Member on the Nominations Committee.

The Nominations Committee operates independently of Leadership Council. The Chair of the Nominations Committee is not a member of Leadership Council and does not attend any Council meetings. However, the Chair and the Nominations Committee may canvass council members and other committee chairs for possible nominees. The Executive Director/Treasurer keeps the Chair informed of Leadership Council activities and issues so these may be taken into account by the committee, as appropriate. The Nominations Committee Chair must circulate the names of all eligible individuals who have agreed to be considered for any potential office to the Ethics Committee Chair before proceeding with the ballot selection with the members of the Nominations Committee. At the same time it is shared with the Ethics Committee, the list of potential nominees should be shared with the entire RSS Council who will have 2 weeks to provide to the Ethics Committee any knowledge of behavior that violates our code of ethics.

Duties of the Chair of the RSS Nominations Committee:

1. Coordinate the Nomination Committee's nomination of a diversified pool of candidates for the elective offices listed above. Diversity considerations should include gender, race and ethnicity, geography, and institutional (e.g., non-land grant and non-academic) factors, as well as representation of the spectrum of research, teaching, extension, public service, and administrative interests of the membership.
2. Using an RSS Business Office provided template for this announcement, place a "call for nominations" in the fall in the RSS eBulletin, on the RSS website, and on the RSS listserv.
3. Notify nominees that they will have to undergo a review by the Ethics Committee before being considered for RSS office.
4. Ensure the privacy and confidentiality of all nominees until they have been cleared by the Ethics Committee.
5. Ensure that Nominations Committee members contact potential candidates and ask them to run for office/stand for election once a candidate short list has been produced.
6. Direct prospective candidates to the list of duties as outlined in the Manual of the Official Policies and Procedures of the Rural Sociological Society (available on the RSS website and/or from the RSS Business Office).
7. Refer candidates to sample nomination biography and photo to be included with the final ballot.
8. Inform candidates that, to be placed on the final ballot, the nomination biography and photo of the candidate choice are due in the business office no later than March 15 of the election year.

9. Inform candidates that the President and/or the Executive Director/Treasurer will notify successful and unsuccessful candidates of the election results no later than June 15 of the election year. This notification will be made in time to allow successful candidates to make arrangements to attend the annual meeting. The RSS slate of candidate officers, council and committee members who stand for election is listed below.

As not all positions require annual election, the RSS Business Office will notify the Nominations Committee Chair of the positions to be filled during a particular election year. The Nominations Committee then assists the Executive Director/Treasurer to conduct elections for officers, council members and committees.

- **President-elect:** serves for three consecutive years; one year as President-elect, one year as President and one year as Past President (and is a voting member of Leadership Council in the year serving as President-elect).
- **Vice-President:** serves for one year (and is a voting member of Leadership Council for that year).
- **Secretary:** serves for a three-year term (and is a voting member for all three years).
- **Leadership Council Member Position One:** serves for two years (is a voting member each year, serves as a standing committee Chair-elect in year one and standing committee Chair in year two. The Candidates for this position must be members affiliated with a Land-grant University.
- **Leadership Council Member Position Two:** serves for two years (is a voting member each year, serves as a standing committee Chair-elect in year one and standing committee Chair in year two. The Candidates for this position must be members affiliated with a non-Land-grant college or university.
- **Leadership Council Member Position Three:** serves for two years (is a voting member each year, serves as a standing committee Chair-elect in year one and standing committee Chair in year two. The Candidates for this position must be members affiliated with a governmental, non-governmental, or private organization.
- **Student Representative to Leadership Council:** serves a two-year term (and is a voting member both years)
- **Chair of the Nominations Committee:** serves for two years, (serves as Chair-elect in year one, and Chair in year two) with no seat or vote on Council.
- **Nominations Committee Position One:** serves for one year, with no seat or vote on Council.
- **Nominations Committee Position Two:** serves for one year, with no seat or vote on Council.
- **Chair of the Ethics Committee Position Three:** serves a three-year term (Chair-elect, Chair, Past Chair) with no seat or vote on Council.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The Program Committee oversees the development of the program for the annual meeting. Research and Interest Group (RIG) chairs also serve on the committee and assist the chair in developing the annual meeting program.

The Program Committee has no upper limit to the number of voting members. The Committee consists of the chair who is appointed by the President-elect to perform duties during the President-elect's term in office, the RIG chairs, other active or emeritus members as deemed necessary, and one student representative.

Duties of the Chair of the RSS Program Committee:

1. With help of the Program Committee, the Chair may create a Handbook for the use of the committee and RIG chairs to help them plan the Annual Meeting and know their responsibilities
2. Contact all RIG chairs about scheduling a business meeting as a minimum criterion for maintaining the group's active status.
3. Conduct the first Program Committee meeting at the annual RSS meeting. This should be scheduled near the end of the annual meeting so that all of the research and interest groups can hold their elections and the newly elected RIG chairs can be in attendance.
4. Place a call for papers in the *RSS eBulletin*, on the RSS website, and through the RSS listserv no later than December of the year preceding the annual meeting for which the committee is responsible to program. The Executive Director/Treasurer will notify the Program Committee Chair when the call for papers is due at the RSS Business Office prior to the dissemination date. (The Research and Interest Groups concurrently may issue a call for papers, if desired.)
5. In that call for papers, announce the February 15th deadline for abstracts, papers, proposals for panel sessions, roundtable discussions, video sessions or displays.
6. After decisions have been made on which submissions are accepted, inform submitters of the status of their submission as soon as possible after the submission deadline. This is especially important for international participants, as early notification is frequently necessary for obtaining visas to travel to the meeting.
7. Supervise the organization of abstracts by topic, and, where appropriate, send these to the research and interest group chairs serving as members of the program committee.
 - The research and interest group chairs should then organize the abstracts they receive into sessions and recruit a session chair.
 - The completed sessions should then be returned to the program chair so all sessions can be scheduled.
8. Schedule sessions to available rooms and times.
9. On or before the February 15 deadline, the program chair will receive a "meeting site template" from the RSS Business Office. This template will show the available rooms and times for scheduling meeting sessions.
 - Mid-year council meetings occur at the venue of the upcoming meeting, so program chairs have a chance to examine the venue.
 - In early May, send the template containing the preliminary program to the RSS Business Office.

- The preliminary program will then be published in the May issue of the *RSS eBulletin* and will also appear on the RSS website.
10. Send the finalized program to the RSS Executive Director/Treasurer no later than four weeks prior to the annual meetings so it can be published in time for the meetings.
 11. During the annual meeting, post a daily schedule of events at each meeting room.

RESEARCH AND INTEREST GROUPS

Council should facilitate Research and Interest Groups' (RIGs') ability to reach their objectives of providing a forum for sharing common interests and exchanging ideas, linking group members to the larger society, promoting research and other professional activities among group members, and assisting in developing the program for the Annual Meeting.

The RSS Council will strive to achieve the proper balance of formality and informality in the organization and operation of interest groups thereby insuring spontaneity and flexibility along with accountability.

Research and interest groups (RIGs) are formed around the substantive interests of RSS members. RIGs are active participants in annual meeting planning and programming through identification, development, and recruitment for program sessions and field trips

New research and interest groups can be formed if at least six members of the Society sign a letter to the President requesting to form an interest group. In this letter, they must identify the name and purpose of the proposed RIG and commit to have a business meeting at least every other year to qualify. Approval by the RSS Leadership Council is required before a new RIG can be recognized.

Each research and interest group will annually select two individuals to serve as chair/chair-elect or as co-chairs, at any stage of professional development, thus ensuring continuity in leadership. The roles of the Chair and Co-Chair are to facilitate communication between the RSS Vice-President—who coordinates RIG activities—and other research and interest groups, and to permit a smooth transition among the leaders within each RIG.

To remain in good standing, a RIG must at a minimum: (1) Hold an annual business meeting; (2) Organize sessions for the Annual Meeting in collaboration with the Program Chair(s); (3) Have a RIG Chair in place at least 15 days after the RSS Annual Meeting; and (4) Provide a written annual report to the RSS Vice President and Business Office within 15 days following the RSS Annual Meeting. The report should include: (1) RIG leadership election results (RIG leader names, email addresses, and position titles); (2) RIG activities completed throughout the year that just ended; (3) Tentative plans for RIG activities in the coming year; and (4) Any questions or concerns with the Vice President and RSS Business Office related to RSS RIG operations that can be shared with Council. The RIG Chair should also keep the RIG's shared online folder updated to facilitate information sharing across terms. For more details, see the complete 2023 version of the Research and Interest Groups (RIGs) Policy Manual in Appendix F.

RIG Membership Dues/Fees

Research and interest groups set annual dues to support RIG activities. (A current listing of these dues is available in ***Appendix A***.) These funds will be collected by the Executive Director/Treasurer as part of the membership process and be maintained in an account for expenditure by the respective RIGs.

The interest groups control their own budgets to support RIG activities under general guidelines for appropriate expenditure of RSS budget lines developed by the Development Committee of the RSS Leadership Council, along with the Executive Director/Treasurer.

Duties of the RIG Chairs

1. Serve as active members of the Program Committee for the Annual Meeting.
2. Receive relevant abstracts from the Program Chairs in order to organize thematic sessions that match RIG interests.

3. Work with the Program Chair to schedule an annual business meeting as a minimum criterion for maintaining the group's active status.
4. Provide information on group activities to the Vice-President and RSS Business Office of RSS.
5. Conduct a formal election for RIG Chair-elect to ensure leadership continuity.
6. As appropriate, consult the Annual Meeting Handbook provided by the Program Committee for guidance on planning the annual meeting and knowing their responsibilities.

During 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 the RSS Development Committee was tasked with developing a RIG policy manual to aid RIG leaders and members in a better understanding of how Research and Interest groups operate within the Society and help them prepare for the RSS annual meeting. The complete Research and Interest Groups (RIGs) Policy Manual can be found in ***Appendix F*** in this manual.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Publications Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the RSS Leadership Council and membership regarding all matters pertaining to the official publication outlets of the Society. The Publications Committee is responsible for evaluating and providing recommendations regarding all publication issues, such as selection of publishing firms for the printing and distribution of Society publications, selection of persons to fill editorial positions, electronic publishing, etc.

Publication Committee Responsibilities

1. Review of the functions of all publications of the Society to ensure that these continue to communicate the desired message and image of the Society to the profession at large.
2. Oversight and supervision of the publication of the official journal and any other publications sponsored by the Society. These publications include *Rural Sociology*, the official journal of RSS; *The Rural Studies Series*, a book series on topics of interest to rural sociologists, social scientists, and policy specialists; and, *Rural Realities*, an information/policy series that seeks to showcase innovative applied research that gives attention to critical and timely rural issues.

The Publications Committee has a minimum of six voting members, including the Chair, Chair-elect, three active or emeritus members, and one student representative. The Chair-elect is appointed for a one-year term by the RSS President-elect, ascends to Chair in the second year, and remains on the Publications Committee in the third year to provide institutional memory and aid the smooth transition of leadership.

Responsibilities of the Publications Committee Chair

The Chair of the Publications Committee is responsible for regular communication with members of the Publications Committee, with individuals who are serving as editors of Society publications, with the RSS President and Executive Committee, and the RSS Leadership Council. Specific responsibilities of the Chair include:

1. Report to the RSS Leadership Council at the midyear and annual Council meetings regarding the status of RSS publications, and report on other publications issues relevant to the interests of the Society.
2. Serve as a conduit for exchange of information pertaining to the Society publications among the RSS membership, the RSS Leadership Council, and the editors of *Rural Sociology*, *The Rural Studies Series*, and other societal publications, as appropriate. When required, provide recommendations to the editors and the Leadership Council regarding publications issues or concerns raised by RSS members.
3. Provide oversight for *Rural Sociology*, monitoring the relationship between the Society and the journal publisher. Approximately one year before the printing contract is scheduled to expire, work with Publications Committee members and the journal editor to evaluate the contract and the publisher's performance, and determine whether the contract should be renewed or rebid. If seeking a new publisher, the Publications Committee is responsible for soliciting and evaluating bids and making recommendations to the RSS Leadership Council regarding a new publishing contract.
4. Solicit periodic reports from the editor of *Rural Sociology* regarding the status of the journal (manuscript submissions, article acceptance, special issue plans, publishing schedules, budget issues, etc.), and communicate those matters to the RSS Leadership Council in the semi-annual reports. Maintain contact with the editor of *Rural Sociology* to identify any new policy issues or

problems that extend beyond the explicit duties of the editor. Work with the editor and members of the Publications Committee to evaluate such issues and problems and submit recommendations to the RSS Leadership Council.

5. Approximately one year before the term of the editor of *Rural Sociology* is due to expire, work with the Publications Committee to solicit applications for a new editor. A new editor should be selected before the existing editor's term expires. This will allow the new editors to better coordinate the transition of the editorial process. It is the Publication and Communications Committee's responsibility to edit the position description as necessary and advertise the position in all appropriate Society online and print publications. The committee is responsible for screening applications and applicants to identify the preferred candidate and make a recommendation for the appointment of a new editor to the RSS Leadership Council. Once the RSS Leadership Council has finalized the selection of a new editor, the Publication and Communications Committee should also work to the extent possible to facilitate the transfer of editorial responsibilities.
6. Provide oversight of *The Rural Studies Series*, working with the series editor and publisher to ensure the highest quality product. Solicit periodic reports from the series editor regarding such things as manuscripts submitted, topics represented in submissions, manuscripts accepted for review, manuscripts accepted for publication, etc., and communicate these matters to the RSS Leadership Council in the semi-annual reports.
7. Serve as a member of *The Rural Studies Series* editorial review board and work with *The Rural Studies Series* editor and Publications Committee to identify two committee members to review for board. Submit recommendations for appointments to that board to the RSS Leadership Council.
8. Approximately one year before the term of the editor of *The Rural Studies Series* is due to expire, work with the Publications Committee to solicit applications for a new editor. It is the Publication and Communications Committee's responsibility to edit the position description as necessary and advertise the position in all appropriate Society online and print publications. The committee is likewise responsible for screening applications and applicants to identify the preferred candidate and make a recommendation for the appointment of a new editor to the RSS Leadership Council. Once the RSS Leadership Council has finalized the selection of a new editor, the Publication and Communications Committee should also work to the extent possible to facilitate the transfer of editorial responsibilities.
9. Provide the Awards and Endowment Committee with results of the *Rural Sociology* Best Paper Award so that the award can be reported during the Awards Ceremony at the Annual Meeting. The *Rural Sociology* Best Paper is determined by the Editor and Editorial Board of Rural Sociology in consultation with the RSS Publications Committee.

Selecting Editors for RSS Publications

The Society has developed the following criteria and procedures to guide the application and selection of editors for Rural Sociology and the Rural Studies Series.

Selection Criteria

In accordance with the Society's mission to publish high quality scholarship, the following criteria will be considered in selecting editors for RSS Publications. To be eligible for consideration as Editor of a RSS Publication, whether *Rural Sociology*, *The Rural Studies Series*, or *Rural Realities*, candidates must:

1. Be members of the Rural Sociological Society and hold a tenured position or equivalent in an academic or non-academic setting. Applications from members of underrepresented groups are encouraged.
2. Evidence an established record of scholarship.
3. Evidence understanding of the mission of the journal or series and its operation, indicated by experience with the journal or series across any of a wide variety of activities (submission, reviewing, editorial board experience, and for Rural Sociology editors, publication in the journal).
4. Provide assessment of the present state of the journal or series, its strengths and challenges, and a strategy for the journal's or the series' future.
5. Demonstrate openness to different methods, theories, and approaches to rural sociology.
6. Evidence a record of responsible service to scholarly publishing and provide evidence of organizational skill and intellectual leadership.
7. For *Rural Sociology*, present a satisfactory budget proposal demonstrating efficient use of available RSS resources as well as institutional support as appropriate, along with commitment to cost-effective operation of the editor's office and responsibilities.

Preparing the Application Packet

Given that the Committee on Publications may receive a number of qualified applications, appointment to the editorship of an RSS publication is highly selective. The guidelines below offer suggestions designed to streamline the application process for applicants and the Committee. The application packet provided to prospective candidates should solicit:

1. A **Vision Statement**: This should contain the applicant's goals and plans for the content of the journal. It may include an assessment of the current strengths, weaknesses, or gaps that the applicant plans to address and how this plan will be operationalized.
2. The **Editor's Background Information**: The name, affiliation, and other important information about the potential editor are required. Evidence of the ability and experience of the editor to provide sound judgment and guidance to potential authors is central to the application. Applicants should provide a clear description of and justification for the structure of the editorial office and responsibilities, as they envision them at this point. Names of individuals that the applicant would like to include on the larger editorial board should not be included. Contacting potential editorial board members can be a time-consuming task that should be done only after an editor has been selected.
3. **Evidence of Institutional Support**: It is important for applicants to consider and address the feasibility of serving as editor in light of the resources RSS can provide and those likely to be available to the candidate. The RSS does not pay for office space or release time, but provides basic financial support for office resources as necessary to journal editors. This support may include funds for editorial assistance, office supplies, postage, and telephone expenses beyond those provided by the editor's home institution. Since the support offered by different institutions varies widely, applicants are encouraged to contact the RSS Executive Director/Treasurer as necessary in order to ensure the feasibility of their application. Letters of support from deans or other appropriate institutional officials should be included. Specific arrangements with a potential new editor and with that individual and his or her institution will occur during the period after the RSS Council makes a selection and the RSS Executive Director/Treasurer and Committee Chair work out the final agreement with this candidate.

4. **A Budget:** A proposal showing the use of RSS resources and institutional support [note that only limited overhead costs are allowable].
5. **A Vita:** No standard form is required.
6. **Two References:** Provide names and contact information for two references whom the Publications Committee may contact.

Selection Process

February 1 is the deadline for receipt of applications. Applications are received by the Chair of the Publications Committee and are reviewed by the whole committee. Prospective editors may be contacted to clarify any issues raised in Committee deliberations. A ranked list of up to three applicants is sent forward to the RSS Council, which appoints the editor. The Chair of the Publication and Communications Committee will contact all applicants to inform them of the Council's decision. The Chair of the Publication and Communications Committee drafts a letter of appointment for the RSS President's signature. This letter should contain the conditions of the appointment (term, budget support, and other items necessary to provide adequate support and clarify expectations).

Timetable for Appointments

1. A call for applications or nominations shall be placed on the RSS website at least six months prior to the application deadline.
2. Applications must be received by the Chair of the Publications Committee by February 1st of the year when an appointment will be made, or earlier, as specified in the call for applications.
3. Following review of all eligible applications, the Publications Committee shall make a list of any candidates it wishes to recommend.
4. The Publications Committee shall submit its recommendation to the RSS President no later than two weeks before the Council meeting at which the final selection will be made.
5. Appointments to the editorship of an RSS publication will be decided by the RSS Leadership Council at the Annual Meeting in the year that precedes start of the appointment.

Editors' Authority and Responsibilities

The editors of *Rural Sociology* and *The Rural Studies Series* shall be the final authority and have ultimate responsibility for matters pertaining to the publication, but may not waive the submission fee set by the RSS Leadership Council.

The editor of *Rural Sociology* shall have sole discretion in selecting and appointing the Book Review editor.

Rural Sociology shall be registered with the Copyright Clearance Center and reproduction of *Rural Sociology* articles allowed at a nominal fee. A statement shall be inserted in *Rural Sociology* indicating that the materials may be reproduced for classroom use without permission, though not for sale.

The editors of *Rural Sociology* and *The Rural Studies Series* will submit an annual report of total receipts and expenditures, as well as a written request for all transfers of funds, as appropriate.

Advertising to and by RSS

The RSS accepts paid advertisements on its website and in Society publications at a rate approved by Council. Advertisements will be accepted from reputable publishers of relevant social science materials.

Advertising space may also be traded between the Society and other publishers as appropriate. The Publications Committee, in conjunction with the RSS Business Office, is authorized to advertise in appropriate publications for purposes of promoting Rural Sociology.

RSS Publications

Rural Sociology

Published since 1937, Rural Sociology (RS) reaches an international audience of social scientists, policy makers, and agency professionals concerned with rural people, places, and problems. It provides a forum for cutting edge research that explores inter-disciplinary approaches to emerging issues, new approaches to older questions and material, and policy relevant discussions of rural development, environmental impacts, the structure of food and agricultural production, and rural-urban linkages. In addition to its long-time interest in sociological approaches to rural policy challenges, RS also emphasizes a variety of other issues such as community revitalization and rural demographic changes. Rural Sociology is currently published by Wiley Blackwell.

The Rural Studies Series

The Rural Studies Series promotes the scholarly analysis of rural social issues. The scope of the series is on a wide range of topics of interest to a broad readership, including studies that examine community and rural social organization, the social dimensions of agriculture, rural populations and economies, natural resources and the environment, and rural poverty and livelihood strategies. Special attention is given to manuscripts that address the connections between the local and global, the embeddedness of social structure and social processes in the organization of social space, and the integration of rural places within the global system. A diversity of theoretical and methodological approaches is represented, and scholars from any the social sciences are encouraged to submit book proposals for possible inclusion in the Series. *The Rural Studies Series* is currently published by West Virginia University Press. The Chair of the Publications Committee serves as a member of the Editorial Review Board of *The Rural Studies Series*, and at least two members of the Publication and Communications Committee review for the board. The RSS maintains a revolving fund of \$2,000 to subsidize books in The Rural Studies Series.

RSS eBulletin (The Rural Sociologist -TRS)

The Rural Sociologist was a quarterly publication that contained announcements, articles, commentary and letters relevant to concerns of the Society. TRS included announcements for awards, meetings, job opportunities, activities of members, recent books by rural sociologists and activities of the Society. TRS was discontinued after December 2012. It was replaced by the *RSS eBulletin*, a monthly electronic newsletter to members.

Past RSS sponsored publications. In the recent past RSS has sponsored a set of applied research briefs, entitled Rural Realities. It provided summaries of research related to contemporary policies issues like, for example, ‘food deserts’ in American communities. The series is currently not being published. Also, from 1990 to 2010 an appointed member of RSS also provided regular editorial inputs to the research annual Research in Rural Sociology and Development, along with representatives from IRSA (International Rural Sociological Society) and ESRS (the European Society for Rural Sociology).

GRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES TO COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

Graduate Student Representatives to Council

Graduate student members of the Society are represented on the RSS Leadership Council. There are two student representatives; their two-year terms are staggered to ensure continuity of leadership and carry-over of duties. Graduate Student Representatives are nominated by the graduate student body of representatives, but elected by the entire body of representatives. In the event that a graduate student representative is not elected, or an elected representative steps down before their term is ended, the President may appoint an interim representative.

The detail below informs prospective Graduate Student Representatives about the responsibilities entailed in the position.

1. **Tenure:** In the first year of the two-year term, the incumbent is the incoming representative. During the second year the incumbent serves as lead representative, mentoring the new representative and ensuring a smooth transition of leadership. Consequently, attendance at the annual meetings and mid-year meetings is necessary both years. The first year of the term begins with the Council meeting that immediately follows the Society's Annual Meeting; the second year of the term concludes with the Council meeting that immediately precedes the Society's Annual Meeting. In between, Graduate Student Representatives are expected to attend all council meetings and meetings of Standing Committees to which they are assigned.
2. **Support and Funding:** It is strongly recommended that students secure approval, along with funding/support, from your academic department, before agreeing to take a Graduate Student Representative position. Council members typically commit one extra day before and after the Annual Meeting to accommodate the Council Meetings. This should be taken into consideration when making budget and travel plans. (To receive funding from RSS for the annual meeting, you must present a paper.)
3. **Responsibilities:** Graduate Student Representatives do not serve on committees, but do have specific responsibilities throughout the year, and particularly at the annual conference. These focus on facilitating networking for the graduate students. See Additional Responsibilities below for a complete list.
4. **Meetings:** Graduate student representatives should attend RSS Mid-Year Council Meetings as well as multiple meetings during the annual conference/Annual Meeting. A typical meeting schedule during the Society's Annual Meeting will consist of the first RSS Council Meeting; the Student Business Meeting; Student Roundtable Session(s); Annual Meeting Planning (Program Committee); and the final RSS Council Meeting on the last day.

Additional Responsibilities of Graduate Student Representatives include:

1. Organizing graduate student social events such as a networking breakfast or happy hour at the annual meeting and running the mentoring program that links graduate students with faculty mentors.
2. Managing the graduate student listserv and using it to communicate with graduate students about accommodations (including facilitating communication between students looking to split lodging costs during the conference), activities within the location of the annual meeting, and other relevant issues.

3. Using the listserv to solicit applications for graduate travel funds and paper proposals for the annual meeting.
4. Organizing professional workshops for the conference such as panels focused on teaching, the job search, etc.
5. Representing graduate students' interests in planning the upcoming annual meeting.
6. Representing graduate students' interests on the Council during meetings.
7. Preparing an annual report on the representatives' activities for the Council meeting.

Graduate Student Representatives to Standing and Ad hoc Committees

Graduate students are represented as voting members on each of the Society's Standing and Ad hoc Committees. Volunteers for these appointments are nominated to the RSS President by the Graduate Student Representatives to Council or through an informal recruitment process. Graduate students interested in serving in these roles should contact their representative or make their interest known to a Council member or Officer of the Society.

Procedure for Appointing Student Representatives to Standing Committees

Student representatives to Council solicit student volunteers to serve on standing and ad hoc committees of the RSS. No later than April 30th of each year, Graduate Student Representatives to Council will submit nominations for committee assignments to the incoming President-elect so the [incoming] President-elect may officially appoint student representatives from those nominated.

In the event there are not enough volunteers for committee assignments, student representatives to Council will actively solicit volunteers. If they are unable to provide nominations for committee assignments one month before the Annual Meetings, the incoming President-elect will appoint student representatives before the Annual Meeting.

AD HOC COMMITTEES OF THE SOCIETY

Ad hoc Committees shall be created as needed by the RSS Executive Committee to perform special tasks for the Society.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

[note: No idea when this was added] The Communications Committee is responsible for the development and enhancement of all forms of communication between the Executive Officers, Leadership Council, and RSS members, as well as others in the rural sociology profession. In this capacity, the Communications Committee provides oversight for all Internet-based communication forms, including the official RSS web site, <http://www.ruralsociology.org>, and determines how the interests of the Society might be better served with improved communications with different audiences. The Communications Committee develops forms of communication and recommends to Council policies for their implementation and maintenance.

Communications Committee Responsibilities

1. Oversight of the development and maintenance of the RSS web site, in conjunction with the RSS Executive Director/Treasurer and RSS Business Office; the Committee is responsible for the selection and oversight of the work of the RSS web manager.
2. Development and maintenance of all electronic forms of communication with RSS members and other audiences, along with exploring innovative ways to foster professional communication.
3. Publication and distribution of the RSS Membership Directory, in conjunction with the RSS Executive Director/Treasurer and RSS Business Office.
4. Updating the Careers in Rural Sociology brochure to assist in the development of the profession and the Society.

Communications Committee Oversight of RIG Webpage Hosting on <http://www.ruralsociology.org>

In an effort to promote interest and involvement in RIG activities, the RSS welcomes the opportunity to host on the RSS server RIG content and functionality. While hosting RIG content on the RSS server is not required, it is highly encouraged. That said, links to RIG content on another organizations' website are permitted on the RSS server free of charge, as are links from the RSS server to any RIG's website served by a different host. Any request to host content and functionality of a RIG associated with RSS shall be made in writing and shall indicate the willingness of the RIG to adhere to the following policy requirements:

1. RIGs may, upon submission of written request, terminate or transfer their webpages and any supporting functionality at any time.
2. RIGs will be provided with no more than 1 gigabyte of space on the RSS server;
3. RIG pages will be linked from the RIG info section of the RSS webpages;
4. RIGs agree to display the RSS logo on their webpages;

5. RIGs can make use of any functionality available on the RSS webpages, such as discussions, listservs, blogs, etc.;
6. RIGs will be charged an appropriate fee, if required, for server space to cover content updates and routine server maintenance costs;
7. RIGs will be charged an appropriate fee, if required, for any technical assistance from the RSS Webmaster. Technical assistance is defined as helping a RIG with the design and/or layout for the RIG web content hosted by RSS.
8. RIGs will be responsible for all content on their webpages and this content should be updated at least monthly. Updating web content consists of checking the site monthly to ensure content currency and accuracy and that the links remain functional. Hosted RIGs should report to the RSS Business Office that the content has been reviewed. Checking or changing RIG website content is considered routine maintenance and is covered by the annual fee. Web content may also be changed by the RIG itself without incurring additional fees.
9. RIGs agree that webpages' organization, presentation, and content will be subject to approval by the Communications Committee and RSS Business Office in order to maintain consistency of appearance and professional presentation and relevance of content consistent with the RSS webpages;
10. The RSS Communications Committee will review RIG webpages annually to ensure professional quality in presentation and content, and may ask for revisions as they deem appropriate and necessary.
11. Any differences of opinion between RIG representatives and the Communications Committee regarding the presentation of RIG materials and use of the functionality available or other interpretation of this policy's provisions will be promptly referred to RSS Council for resolution. Such referrals will be in writing and will present the case taken by each party in the discussion.

The Standing Committee on RIGs will review this policy as necessary to ensure continued relevance and may request changes to this policy at any time, pending approval of the RSS Council.

Communications Committee Oversight of Graduate Student Job- Search Posting

The Society's official website <http://www.ruralsociology.org> will provide space for graduate students who are on the job market to post a short biographical sketch and link to their curriculum vita. The RSS Business Office will assist with these postings and the Communications Committee will provide oversight.

Guidelines on Statements by RSS

As a professional organization, RSS should carefully balance professional relevance and leadership, ideological neutrality, and potential impacts on its membership when considering whether to make any statement on behalf of the organization. The EC should thus make decisions on public statements using the following criteria:

1. **Substantive Relevance:** Does the proposed statement fall within RSS's professional scope, expertise, or mission?
2. **Ideological Neutrality:** Can RSS maintain a non-partisan, balanced tone in the statement?
3. **Membership Impact:** Would issuing the statement expose RSS members to personal or professional risk? RSS's membership is diverse on the basis of professional rank, institutional

affiliation, citizenship status, gender identity, race and ethnicity, age, and geographic location. Risk assessment needs to account for the diversity of vulnerability within our membership. This is especially the case for early-career professionals, non-citizens, and those in politically sensitive regions.

4. **Organizational Integrity:** Does the statement align with the ethical, legal, and reputational responsibilities of RSS?

When the statement touches on complex issues or when no agreement is reached within RSS leadership, the EC should consult with members with relevant expertise, members potentially put at risk, and/or legal counsel. However, we do not recommend systematic consultation with the full membership because of the timeliness often associated with public statements. Any decision related to RSS issuing or endorsing a statement should be case-specific and transparent.

ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY

Site Selection Criteria for RSS Annual Meetings

The Executive Director/Treasurer will have the ultimate responsibility for site selection, including all contract negotiations, for the annual meeting and the mid-year Council meeting. The Executive Director/Treasurer will strive to select venues for future meetings that can facilitate attendance and participation of a high proportion of the RSS membership and attract new participants.

In keeping with Article IX of the Constitution, meetings of the Society shall be held in venues that are fully accessible to all members, without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability. Furthermore, only facilities that meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines will be considered. The Society will negotiate facility contracts that provide cancellation provisions whenever active labor disputes preclude membership acceptance of the venue.

No single criterion will determine site selection decisions. Instead, meeting locations will be evaluated according to a variety of criteria, with the goal of attaining an optimal balance across the following areas of consideration.

Primary Site Selection Criteria:

- Preferred meeting dates will be between July 20 and August 15, approximately.
- Accessibility of the location via commercial air service should provide cost-effective travel options for meeting participants.
- Negotiated costs for conference services, as well as available lodging options for meeting participants, should keep registration fees and lodging at reasonable levels.
- To increase interaction and exchange with kindred society members and to build linkages with kindred organizations, RSS should consider coordination and co- location with the American Sociological Association (ASA), the International Rural Sociology Association (IRSA), and other professional organizations focused on rural issues and rural studies when it is deemed to the advantage of RSS.

Secondary Site Selection Criteria:

- Variety in regional location of meetings to foster recruitment of new members and increase meeting participation within particular regions of the U.S.
- Attractiveness of the site and surrounding areas in terms of various ‘amenity’ conditions, including climate, recreation and tourism opportunities, or in terms of more ‘urban’ community attractions such as dining and entertainment options.
- Opportunities to meet periodically on or near a university campus, particularly at institutions where there is a significant tradition of and ongoing focus on rural social science research and education.
- Availability of lower-cost lodging options for student participation.

- Participation by potential host facilities and communities in “green” activities such as the recycling of waste products, energy conservation measures used in the host community, incorporation of locally produced food products in food services, or other activities.

Meeting Finances and Budget

The Executive Director/Treasurer’s and Business Office will be responsible for meeting finances. The Executive Director/Treasurer develops association and annual meeting budgets in conjunction with the Executive Committee (formerly the Operations and Financial Affairs Committee) for Council approval. The Executive Director/Treasurer will prepare a budget for the Annual Meeting for an initial review at the first meeting of Council at the annual meeting, with final approval to take place at the mid-year Council meeting.

Annual Meeting Fees

1. All expenses of the Program Committee, local arrangements, site selection and meeting management shall be incorporated into the costs of the Annual Meeting. Registration fees should be set to make the Annual Meeting self-sustaining without regular subsidies from the Society’s operations budget.
2. Except where otherwise specified, all participants attending the Annual Meeting must pay the appropriate registration fee.
3. Although membership in the Society is not required prior to attending the Annual Meeting, the registration fee for nonmembers will be the full, undiscounted rate, plus the membership fee and a small increment with the option presented for the participant to become a member and then to join at the discounted rate, if they pay the membership fee on-site.
4. A one-day rate will be established that is one-half of the full meeting rate.
5. The Society will recognize small grants provided by the RSS JEDI Committee to subsidize meeting attendance by under-represented groups. The JEDI Committee works with the Awards and Endowment Committee to promote JEDI Scholar Travel Grants, identify eligible groups for each annual meeting, select individual grant recipients, and develop sources of supplementary funding for travel grants.
6. Additionally, budget permitting, a small number of registrants may have their fees waived if the Executive Director/Treasurer judges they would not be able to attend the meeting at the established registration rate. While the fee waiver is at the discretion of the Executive Director/Treasurer, the RIGs, Program Committee, and JEDI Committee may identify people for whom a waiver of registration fees could be considered.
7. The Society also maintains a registration rate that is 1.5 times the student rate for limited resource professionals who provide documentation of need to the Executive Director/Treasurer.
8. RSS requires membership for all presenters unless a hardship waiver is approved by the Executive Director/Treasurer.
9. To address fund-raising needs of the Awards and Endowment Committee or the JEDI Committee, the Executive Director/Treasurer and RSS Business Office will help to organize a silent auction as a regular function of the Annual Meeting.

10. The Executive Committee will review the financial impact of the discounts, travel grants and waived fees after the meeting to determine the effect of these changes and report back to Council.

RSS Policy on Exhibits, Advertisements, and Sales

The Society maintains a policy on exhibits, advertisements, and sales. This policy shall be communicated in writing to all prospective exhibitors, advertisers, and sales agents. The details of this policy statement may be found in an Appendix D, and the most current guidance is available on the <http://www.ruralsociology.org> website.

RSS Policies of a Transient Nature

The Society maintains a number of policies, the details of which change frequently, though guided and in accord with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society. These include policies on changing dues structure, travel expense reimbursement, the policy on exhibits, advertisements and sales, and Council approved contracts, among others. The official website of the Society, <http://www.ruralsociology.org>, maintains the most current information and instruction for members and the public on these policies. Such policies extant as of January 2018 are detailed in a series of Appendices to this Manual of the Official Policies and Procedures of the Rural Sociological Society. These appendices follow.

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

At each annual meeting, the RSS president issues land acknowledgment statements and organizes the programming of a panel on land acknowledgment (and related issues) relevant to the site of the annual meeting. While the Executive Committee has discretion on strategy and logistics on these practices, the JEDI Committee and other committees and RIGs can provide additional guidance and counsel.

APPENDICES

- A. Membership Categories and Dues, effective July 2025
- B. Contracts
- C. Policy Statement on Reimbursement of Travel Expenses-General Information
- D. RSS Policy on Exhibits, Advertisements, and Sales
- E. Complete Code of Ethics and Policies and Procedures, as of July 28, 2017
- F. Research and Interest Groups Policy Manual
- G. Scientific Organization Membership Proposal Request

APPENDIX A: MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 2025

Professional Membership is based on a sliding scale of annual income. Please note that the Professional membership categories “< \$30,000” will have web access only to Rural Sociology, with no printed copy of the journal available.

Our membership year begins January 1 and runs to December 31, each year.

Professional Income and Student Membership Dues Categories

Online Journal only (non-member)	
Regular Member < \$15,000.00	
Professional \$15,000.00 - \$30,000.00	
Professional \$30,000.00 - \$60,000.00	
Professional \$60,000.00 - \$90,000.00	
Professional \$90,000.00 - \$125,000.00	
Professional > \$125,000.00	
Student (As of January 1)	

RSS discontinued accepting new Lifetime Memberships in January 2017. Lifetime Members prior to January 2017 remain Lifetime members. We encourage Lifetime members to renew their RIG memberships each year.

Research and Interest Groups (RIGs)

RIG Number & Name		Professional Dues	Student Dues
01	Youth, Education, and Rural Vitality	\$5.00	\$5.00
02	Community, Health, and Family	\$10.00	\$5.00
04	Natural Resources	\$10.00	\$5.00
05	Population	\$10.00	0

06	Rural Law and Justice	\$10.00	\$10.00
07	Rural Poverty	\$10.00	\$10.00
08	Rural Policy	\$5.00	\$5.00
09	Rural Race and Ethnicity	\$10.00	\$5.00
10	Gender and Sexualities	\$10.00	\$5.00
11	Applied & Extension	\$5.00	\$5.00
12	Sociology of Agriculture	\$15.00	\$5.00
13	Teaching and Curriculum	\$5.00	0
14	The Elders	\$5.00	\$5.00
15	International Development	\$10.00	\$5.00

Failure to Complete Payment of Lifetime Membership Fee

The RSS offers members an opportunity to join the Society for a lifetime at a reasonable cost³. A commitment to become a lifetime member means either a one-time payment or an annual pro-rated payment over four years. Once a member has indicated they wish to take advantage of this opportunity and initiates the payment process, failure to pay the membership fee in any year during the four-year pro-rata period will automatically terminate the lifetime membership and the total amount paid will be credited to multiple annual membership fee years based on current rates for an annual membership at the professional level. The member will be notified after no payment has been received by April 1 that they will be given an additional 30 days to become current with the payment plan before this recalculation action is taken and they are removed from the lifetime membership category.

³ RSS discontinued offering Lifetime Memberships in January 2017.

APPENDIX B: CONTRACTS

Digital Conversion of Contracts

All contracts identified in a master list of RSS contractual obligations will be converted to digital/Adobe Acrobat format.

Electronic Access – Publisher’s Contracts

RSS shall enter into a contract with Ingenta our publishers, whether they are Ingenta, Wiley, West Virginia Press or whomever for online publication services for Rural Sociology. The Executive Director/Treasurer is authorized to execute the contract on behalf of the Rural Sociological Society.

Cooperation with Cornell Library

The RSS will cooperate with Cornell's Mann Library allowing them to make back issues of Rural Sociology available as part of their historic library of agriculture project.

APPENDIX C: POLICY STATEMENT ON REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES-GENERAL INFORMATION

The Society reimburses reasonable and necessary expenses for Society-related travel. The approval for reimbursed expenses must be obtained in writing from the President and Executive Director/Treasurer prior to scheduling travel. The Society's reimbursement policies are based on IRS guidelines for an accountable plan, which allows it to reimburse employees/representatives of the Society for authorized business expenses with no effect on compensation. Other than for regularly scheduled meetings of the RSS Council or meetings of RSS affiliates (e.g. IRSA), travel should only be undertaken with approval of the President and RSS Executive Director/Treasurer. All reimbursements for expenses incurred are contingent upon the availability of adequate funds.

Where feasible and appropriate, the traveler should have the Society pay pre-trip travel expenses prior to departure. Eligible expenses the traveler pays out-of-pocket are reimbursable after the trip. For additional guidance on travel, call the RSS Business Office.

Method of Transportation

Generally speaking, Society representatives should select the method of transportation that best meets the needs of the Society and themselves.

Airfare

To obtain airfare:

1. Go through an Internet site or a consolidator and make the purchase through a personal or RSS credit card, personal check or cash.
2. When purchasing tickets using your own funds and then requesting reimbursement after the trip, include the original used passenger coupon with your request (when using ticket-less travel, attach the original itinerary). If you incur a transaction fee, you will be reimbursed only up to the maximum amount the contracted agencies charge as shown on the transaction record.
3. Airfare reimbursements will not exceed the advertised coach/economy fares charged by the airline chosen for travel.

NOTE: Travelers and travel arrangers should understand the risks associated with tickets obtained from consolidators and through the Internet.

Personal Vehicle

1. The official reimbursement rate for mileage is the rate established by the IRS. When using your vehicle, you are responsible for liability insurance coverage.
2. If you elect to drive a personal vehicle rather than fly, you must provide a comparison between the cost of driving and the cost of flying.
3. For this comparison, the cost to drive includes mileage, meals and lodging incurred en route to and from the destination. For this comparison, the cost to fly includes airfare, mileage and reasonable travel expenses between traveler's home or place of work and airport and between airport and hotel in the destination city. The cost of the airfare should be based on a 7-14 day advance coach fare, restricted or non-restricted. Include with the travel voucher the following

information:

- The agency/web site where you obtained the quote and the phone number and name of the agent.
- The date you obtained the quote.
- The fare quoted based on a 7-14 day advance coach fare.

Parking

Parking fees at the airport and/or hotel or, if a using personal or rented vehicles, will be reimbursed upon presentation of a valid receipt.

Travel to/from Airport

Mileage or taxi/airport shuttle fees incurred traveling to and from an airport will be reimbursed at the mileage rate listed herein.

Lodging

Employees and representatives of the RSS should select the place and type of lodging that best meet the needs of the Society and themselves. Reasonable and necessary amounts are allowed for lodging.

- Whenever possible or if necessary, arrange direct billing of lodging expenses. The RSS Business Office can provide the necessary paperwork to the hotel or other facility in order to exempt the Society from sales tax.
- A receipted, itemized statement furnished by the lodging place and documentation of payment is required for all lodging expenses. Summary statements provided by credit card companies are not acceptable as documentation of payment.

Meals

Reasonable and necessary meal expenses you incur during authorized Society's travel are reimbursable. When a registration fee includes the cost of meals or meals are provided, the traveler must not claim the same items.

Allowance for Domestic Travel

For overnight travel within the 50 United States and the District of Columbia, the meal expense allowance is not to exceed the federal General Services Administration (GSA) guidelines (found at www.GSA.gov), including tips. If fewer than three meals per day are subject to allowance, amounts (including tips) should not exceed the maximum reimbursement for the total of the eligible meals that day:

For example, if a traveler is eligible for reimbursement for both lunch and dinner and, under the GSA guidelines, a total of up to \$32.00 can be claimed for actual expenses for those two meals, that is the maximum reimbursable amount regardless of the distribution between the two meals. If only \$5.00 is spent at lunch, an expenditure of up to \$27.00 may be claimed for dinner.

Meals included in conference registrations, covered by other Society payments, or paid by others, are not eligible for reimbursement to the traveler. Such meals must be identified as provided by inserting "P" in the appropriate block on the travel expense form.

Notwithstanding the reference to GSA guidelines as a framework for reimbursement, prescribed

maximums are not to be treated collectively as per diem allowances nor are they to be used individually without regard to the actual and necessary expenses. If actual expenses are less than the maximum under the guidelines, reimbursement is allowed only for actual expenses.

Allowance for Foreign Travel

For travel outside the 50 United States and the District of Columbia, reimbursement is allowed for meal expenses at a rate not to exceed that prescribed by the U.S. Department of State Standardized Regulations for "Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE)" These rates are maximums for the locations specified in the Standardized Regulations and the monthly bulletins that update them. Reimbursement will be made for actual costs up to the published daily maximums (prorated to each meal when fewer than three meals are eligible).

Registration Fees

If you pay the registration fee yourself, you may claim reimbursement after the event by submitting a valid receipt with the name of the conference and sponsor clearly shown along with the amount(s) paid as registration fees.

Reimbursement Process

Reimbursement of expenses will be made upon receipt of a completed RSS Travel Expense form. Reimbursement will be made by check within 10 working days of receipt of the completed Expense form.

- Attach itemized receipts for lodging, parking, on site transportation, travel and meal expenditures and any other expenditure over \$50.
- Sign the Expense form.
- Submit the Expense form to the RSS Business Office.

Timeliness Requirements

Travelers must properly account for trip expenses within 60 days after the end of the trip on which the expenses are paid or incurred. For expenses reported more than 60 days after the end of the trip, the reason for the delay must be documented. Reimbursement is subject to the availability of funds and the RSS Council has the discretion to deny reimbursement. If late reimbursement is made, it will be reported to the IRS as taxable compensation.

Travel Expenses Paid by Other Organizations

Travel expenses that will be reimbursed by another organization rather than by the Society should not be charged to the Society. The cost of airline tickets and other travel expenses should be borne by the traveler and the traveler reimbursed directly from the sponsoring organization.

APPENDIX D: RSS POLICY ON EXHIBITS, ADVERTISEMENTS, AND SALES

The Society maintains a policy on exhibits, advertisements, and sales. This policy shall be communicated in writing to all prospective exhibitors, advertisers, and sales agents. The details of this policy statement may be found in the Appendix, and the most current guidance is available on the ruralsociology.org website.

All items exhibited, advertised, and/or sold under the auspices of the Rural Sociological Society (e.g., at the Annual Meeting, or in direct mailing to RSS members) must be of a nature that they can reasonably be considered:

1. “Tools of the trade” by rural sociologists acting in the professional capabilities as faculty, students, and/or sociological practitioners;
2. Of benefit to individual members (e.g., insurance offered at competitive rates because of group membership; or
3. Of benefit to RSS while insuring that individual members have adequate information regarding costs to subscribers (e.g., credit cards, a portion of whose profits go to RSS).

The character of the exhibits, advertisements, or sales is subject to the approval of the President and the Executive Director and Treasurer (Executive Officer). The RSS reserves the right to refuse any application for exhibit space, advertising, or sales, and to curtail or cancel any such exhibit, advertisement, or sale which, in the judgment of the above-named persons, does not conform to the spirit of the guidelines. The policy applies to unacceptable displays, advertisements, or sales of novelties and souvenirs, as well as the personal conduct of exhibitors or their representatives. RSS must recover the costs of processing requests for production of sets of membership mailing labels and similar output and production of the mailing labels; as a result, RSS may assess a fee of not less than \$100 for the production of labels and the like. However, at the discretion of the Executive Director and Treasurer, other mutually beneficial exchanges may be acceptable in lieu of direct payment.

The RSS will not sell or otherwise provide to any non-member the RSS membership e-mail list.

APPENDIX E: COMPLETE CODE OF ETHICS AND POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, AS OF JULY 28, 2017

Rural Sociological Society

Code of Ethics

Adapted from the 2008 version of the Code of Ethics of the American Sociological Association (with permission). Copyright @ 2017 by the Rural Sociological Society.

Code of Ethics

Rural Sociological Society

(Approved by the RSS Membership 07/28/2017)

INTRODUCTION

PREAMBLE

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Principle A Integrity

Principle B: Respect for People's Rights, Dignity, and Diversity

Principle C: Professional Competence

Principle D: Professional and Scientific Responsibility

Principle E: Social Responsibility

ETHICAL STANDARDS

12. Nondiscrimination

13. Non-exploitation

14. Harassment

15. Professional and Scientific Standards

16. Competence

17. Representation and Misuse of Expertise

18. Delegation and Supervision

19. Employment Decisions

19.1. Fair Employment Practices

19.2. Responsibilities of Employees

20. Conflicts of Interest

20.1. Adherence to Professional Standards

20.2. Disclosure

20.3. Avoidance of Personal Gain

20.4. Decision-making in the Workplace

20.5. Decision-making Outside of the Workplace

21. Public Communications

21.1. Public Communications

21.2. Statements by Others

22. Research Ethics

23. Informed Consent

23.1. Scope of Informed Consent

- 23.2. Informed Consent
- 23.3. Informed Consent of Students and Subordinates
- 23.4. Informed Consent with Children
- 23.5. Use of Deception in Research
- 23.6. Use of Recording Technology
- 24. Confidentiality in Research and Professional Practice
 - 24.1. Maintaining Confidentiality
 - 24.2. Limits of Confidentiality
 - 24.3. Discussing Confidentiality and Its Limits
 - 24.4. Anticipation of Possible Uses of Information
 - 24.5. Electronic Transmission of Confidential Information
 - 24.6. Anonymity of Sources
 - 24.7. Minimizing Intrusions on Privacy
 - 24.8. Preservation of Confidential Information
- 25. Research Planning, Implementation, and Dissemination
 - 25.1. Planning and Implementation
 - 25.2. Unanticipated Research Opportunities
 - 25.3. Offering Inducements for Research Participants
 - 25.4. Reporting on Research
 - 25.5. Data Sharing
- 26. Plagiarism
- 27. Authorship Credit
- 28. Publication Process
 - 28.1. Submission of Manuscripts for Publication
 - 28.2. Duplicate Publication of Data
 - 28.3. Responsibilities of Editors
- 29. Responsibilities of Reviewers
- 30. Education, Teaching, and Training
 - 30.1. Administration of Education Programs
 - 30.2. Teaching and Training
- 31. Contractual and Consulting Services
- 32. Adherence to the Code of Ethics
 - 32.1. Familiarity with the Code of Ethics
 - 32.2. Confronting Ethical Issues
 - 32.3. Fair Treatment of Parties in Ethical Disputes

- 32.4. Reporting Ethical Violations of Others
- 32.5. Cooperating with Ethics Committees
- 32.6. Improper Complaints

INTRODUCTION

The Rural Sociological Society's (RSS's) Code of Ethics sets forth the principles and ethical standards that underlie RSS members' professional responsibilities and conduct. These principles and standards should be used as guidelines when examining everyday professional activities. They constitute normative statements for RSS members and provide guidance on issues that RSS members may encounter in their professional work.

The Preamble and General Principles of the Code are aspirational goals to guide RSS members toward the highest ideals of our Society. Although the Preamble and General Principles are not enforceable rules, they should be considered by RSS members in arriving at an ethical course of action and may be considered by ethics bodies in interpreting the Ethical Standards.

The Ethical Standards set forth enforceable rules for conduct by RSS members. Most of the Ethical Standards are written broadly to apply to RSS members in varied roles, and the application of an Ethical Standard may vary depending on the context. The Ethical Standards are not exhaustive. Any conduct that is not specifically addressed by this Code of Ethics is not necessarily ethical or unethical.

Membership in the RSS commits members to adhere to the RSS Code of Ethics and to the Policies and Procedures of the RSS Ethics Committee. Members are advised of this obligation upon joining the Society and that violations of the Code may lead to the imposition of sanctions, including termination of membership. RSS members subject to the Code of Ethics may be reviewed under these Ethical Standards only if the activity is part of or affects their work-related functions, or if the activity is sociological in nature. Personal activities having no connection to or effect on RSS members' performance of their professional roles are not subject to the Code of Ethics.

PREAMBLE

This Code of Ethics articulates a common set of values upon which RSS members build their professional and scientific work. The Code is intended to provide both the general principles and the rules to cover professional situations encountered by RSS members. It has as its primary goal the welfare and protection of the individuals and groups with whom RSS members work. It is the individual responsibility of each RSS member to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct in research, teaching, practice, and service.

The development of a dynamic set of ethical standards for a RSS member's work-related conduct requires a personal commitment to a lifelong effort to act ethically; to encourage ethical behavior by students, supervisors, supervisees, employers, employees, and colleagues; and to consult with others as needed concerning ethical problems. Each RSS member supplements, but does not violate, the values and rules specified in the Code of Ethics based on guidance drawn from personal values, culture, and experience.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The following General Principles are aspirational and serve as a guide for RSS members in determining ethical courses of action in various contexts, including workplaces, research sites, and professional meetings. They exemplify the highest ideals of professional conduct.

Principle A: Integrity

RSS members are honest, fair, and respectful of others in their professional activities—in research, teaching, practice, and service. RSS members do not knowingly act in ways that jeopardize either their own or others' professional welfare. RSS members conduct their affairs in ways that inspire trust and confidence; they do not knowingly make statements that are false, misleading, or deceptive.

Principle B: Respect for People's Rights, Dignity, and Diversity

RSS members respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all people. They strive to eliminate bias in their professional activities, and they do not tolerate any forms of discrimination based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or identity, disability, health conditions, or marital, domestic, or parental status. They are sensitive to cultural, individual, and role differences in serving, teaching, and studying groups of people with distinctive characteristics. In all of their work-related activities, RSS members acknowledge the rights of others to hold values, attitudes, and opinions that differ from their own. We believe deeply in the free expression of ideas, in civil discourse founded upon mutual respect among participants, and in the value of scientific research unencumbered by political considerations. We oppose actions and words that demean, exclude, and otherwise marginalize individuals and groups of different genders, races, identities, sexual orientations, and national origins.

Principle C: Professional Competence

RSS members strive to maintain the highest levels of competence in their work; they recognize the limitations of their expertise; and they undertake only those tasks for which they are qualified by education, training, or experience. They recognize the need for ongoing education to remain professionally competent, and they utilize the appropriate scientific, professional, technical, and administrative resources needed to ensure competence in their professional activities. They consult with other professionals when necessary for the benefit of their students, research participants, and other stakeholders.

Principle D: Professional and Scientific Responsibility

RSS members adhere to the highest scientific and professional standards and accept responsibility for their work. RSS members understand that they form a community and show respect for other RSS members even when they disagree on theoretical, methodological, or personal approaches to professional activities. RSS members value the public trust in our work and are concerned about their ethical behavior and that of other RSS members that might compromise that trust. While endeavoring always to be collegial, RSS members must never let the desire to be collegial outweigh their shared responsibility for ethical behavior. When appropriate, they consult with colleagues to prevent or avoid unethical conduct.

Principle E: Social Responsibility

RSS members are aware of their professional and scientific responsibility to the communities and societies in which they live and work. They apply and make public their knowledge to contribute to the public good. When undertaking research, they strive to enhance the quality of rural life, communities and the environment, both in North America and elsewhere in the world. We applaud the efforts of RSS members and others who seek to assist vulnerable and marginalized peoples wherever they may be.

ETHICAL STANDARDS**1. Nondiscrimination**

RSS members do not engage in discrimination in their work based on age; gender; race; ethnicity; national origin; religion; sexual orientation or identity; disability; health conditions; marital, domestic, or parental status; or any other applicable basis proscribed by law. RSS members are encouraged to report instances of discrimination they observe in their workplace to the proper authorities.

2. Non-exploitation

- a) Whether for personal, economic, or professional advantage, RSS members do not exploit persons over whom they have direct or indirect supervisory, evaluative, or other authority such as students, supervisees, employees, or research participants.

- b) RSS members do not directly supervise or exercise evaluative authority over any person with whom they have a sexual relationship, including students, supervisees, employees, or research participants.
- c) RSS members are encouraged to report instances of exploitation they observe in their workplace to the proper authorities.

3. Harassment

RSS members do not engage in harassment of any person, including students, supervisees, employees, research participants, or other RSS members. Harassment consists of a single intense and severe act or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts which are demeaning, abusive, offensive, or create a hostile professional or workplace environment. Sexual harassment may include sexual solicitation, physical advance, or verbal or non-verbal conduct that is sexual in nature. Racial harassment may include unnecessary, exaggerated, or unwarranted attention or attack, whether verbal or non-verbal, because of a person's race or ethnicity. Acts of harassment can be based on age, race, socioeconomic status and socioeconomic origins, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, health conditions, political affiliation, marital status, domestic status, parental status, or any other applicable basis proscribed by law. RSS members are encouraged to report instances of harassment they observe in their workplace to the proper authorities.

4. Professional and Scientific Standards

RSS members adhere to the highest possible technical standards that are reasonable and responsible in their research, teaching, practice, and service activities. They rely on scientifically and professionally derived knowledge; act with honesty and integrity; and avoid untrue, deceptive, or undocumented statements in undertaking work-related functions or activities.

5. Competence

- a) RSS members conduct research, teach, practice, and provide service only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, or appropriate professional experience.
- b) RSS members conduct research, teach, practice, and provide service in new areas or involving new techniques only after they have taken reasonable steps to ensure the competence of their work in these areas.
- c) RSS members who engage in research, teaching, practice, or service maintain awareness of current scientific and professional information in their fields of activity and undertake continuing efforts to maintain competence in the skills they use.
- d) RSS members refrain from undertaking an activity when their personal circumstances may interfere with their professional work or lead to harm for a student, supervisee, human subject, client, colleague, or other person to whom they have a scientific, teaching, consulting, or other professional obligation.

6. Representation of Expertise

- a) In research, teaching, practice, service, or other situations where RSS members render professional judgments or present their expertise, they accurately and fairly represent their areas and degrees of expertise.
- b) RSS members do not accept grants, contracts, consultation, or work assignments from individual or organizational clients or sponsors that appear likely to require violation of the standards in this Code of Ethics. RSS members dissociate themselves from such activities when they discover a violation and are unable to achieve its correction.

- c) Because RSS members' scientific and professional judgments and actions may affect the lives of others, they are alert to and guard against personal, financial, social, organizational, or political factors that might lead to misrepresentation of their knowledge, expertise, or influence.
- d) If RSS members learn of misrepresentation of their work, they take reasonable steps to correct or minimize the misrepresentation.

7. Delegation and Supervision

- a) RSS members provide proper training and supervision to their students, supervisees, or employees and take reasonable steps to see that such persons perform services responsibly, competently, and ethically.
- b) RSS members delegate to their students, supervisees, or employees only those responsibilities that such persons, based on their education, training, or experience, can reasonably be expected to perform either independently or with the level of supervision provided.
- c) RSS members who work under the supervision of others (e.g. students, junior faculty, and government employees) should be provided avenues to raise concerns about possible mistreatment or inadequate preparation without risk of retaliation.

8. Employment Decisions

RSS members have an obligation to adhere to the highest ethical standards when participating in employment related decisions, when seeking employment, and when planning to resign from a position.

8.1. Fair Employment Practices

- a) When participating in employment-related decisions, RSS members make every effort to ensure equal opportunity and fair treatment to all full- and part-time employees. They do not discriminate in hiring, promotion, salary, treatment, or any other conditions of employment or career development on the basis of age; gender; race; ethnicity; national origin; religion; sexual orientation or identity; disability; health conditions; marital, domestic, or parental status; or any other applicable basis proscribed by law.
- b) When participating in employment-related decisions, RSS members specify the requirements for hiring, promotion, tenure, and termination and communicate these requirements thoroughly to full- and part-time employees and prospective employees.
- c) When participating in employment-related decisions, RSS members have the responsibility to be informed of fair employment codes, to communicate this information to employees, and to help create an atmosphere upholding fair employment practices for full- and part-time employees.
- d) When participating in employment-related decisions, RSS members inform prospective full- and part-time employees of any constraints on research and publication and negotiate clear understandings about any conditions that may limit research and scholarly activity.

8.2. Responsibilities of Employees

- a) When seeking employment, RSS members provide prospective employers with accurate and complete information on their professional qualifications and experiences.
- b) When leaving a position, permanently or temporarily, RSS members provide their employers with adequate notice and take reasonable steps to reduce negative effects of leaving.

9. Conflicts of Interest

RSS members maintain the highest degree of integrity in their professional work and avoid conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflict. Conflicts of interest arise when RSS members' personal or financial interests prevent them from performing their professional work in an unbiased manner. In

research, teaching, practice, and service, RSS members are alert to situations that might cause a conflict of interest and take appropriate action to prevent conflict or disclose it to appropriate parties.

9.1. Adherence to Professional Standards

Irrespective of their personal or financial interests or those of their employers or clients, RSS members adhere to professional and scientific standards in (1) the collection, analysis, or interpretation of data; (2) the reporting of research; (3) the teaching, professional presentation, or public dissemination of sociological knowledge; and (4) the identification or implementation of appropriate contractual, consulting, or service activities.

9.2. Disclosure

RSS members disclose relevant sources of financial support and relevant personal or professional relationships that may have the appearance of or potential for a conflict of interest to an employer or client, to the sponsors of their professional work, or in public speeches and writing.

9.3. Avoidance of Personal Gain

- a) Under all circumstances, RSS members do not use or otherwise seek to gain financially or professionally from information or material received in a confidential context (e.g., knowledge obtained from reviewing a manuscript or serving on a proposal review panel), unless they have authorization to do so or until that information is otherwise made publicly available.
- b) Under all circumstances, RSS members do not seek to gain from information or material in an employment or client relationship without permission of the employer or client.

9.4. Decision-making in the Workplace

In their workplace, RSS members take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts and carefully scrutinize potentially biasing affiliations or relationships. In research, teaching, practice, or service, such potentially biasing affiliations or relationships include, but are not limited to, situations involving family, business, or close personal friendships or those with whom RSS members have had strong conflict or disagreement.

9.5. Decision-making Outside of the Workplace

In professional activities outside of their workplace, RSS members in all circumstances abstain from engaging in deliberations and decisions that allocate or withhold benefits or rewards from individuals or institutions if they have biasing affiliations or relationships. These biasing affiliations or relationships are: 1) current employment or being considered for employment at an organization or institution that could be construed as benefiting from the decision; 2) current officer or board member of an organization or institution that could be construed as benefiting from the decision; 3) current employment or being considered for employment at the same organization or institution where an individual could benefit from the decision; 4) a spouse, domestic partner, or known relative who as an individual could benefit from the decision; or 5) a current business or professional partner, research collaborator, employee, supervisee, or student who as an individual could benefit from the decision.

10. Professional Communications

RSS members adhere to the highest standards in professional communications about their professional services, credentials and expertise, work products, or publications, whether these communications are from themselves or from others.

10.1. RSS Member Communications

- a) RSS members take steps to ensure the accuracy of all of their professional communications. Such communications include, but are not limited to, websites and social media, directory listings, personal resumes or curriculum vitae, advertising, brochures or printed matter, interviews or comments to the media, statements in legal proceedings, lectures and public oral presentations, or other published materials.
- b) RSS members do not make professional statements that are false, deceptive, misleading, or fraudulent, either because of what they state, convey, or suggest or because of what they omit, concerning their research, practice, or other work activities or those of persons or organizations with which they are affiliated. Such activities include, but are not limited to, false or deceptive statements concerning RSS members' (1) training, experience, or competence; (2) academic degrees; (3) credentials; (4) institutional or association affiliations; (5) services; (6) fees; or (7) publications or research findings. RSS members do not make false or deceptive statements concerning the scientific basis for, results of, or degree of success from their professional services.
- c) When RSS members provide professional advice or comment by means of public lectures, demonstrations, radio or television programs, prerecorded tapes, printed articles, mailed material, or other media, they take reasonable precautions to ensure that (1) the statements are based on appropriate research, literature, and practice; and (2) the statements are otherwise consistent with this Code of Ethics.

10.2. Statements by Others

- a) RSS members who engage or employ others to create or place public statements that promote their work products, professional services, or other activities retain responsibility for such statements.
- b) RSS members make reasonable efforts to prevent others whom they do not directly engage, employ, or supervise (such as employers, publishers, sponsors, organizational clients, members of the media) from making deceptive statements concerning their professional research, teaching, or practice activities.
- c) In working with the press, radio, television, or other communications media or in advertising in the media, RSS members are cognizant of potential conflicts of interest or appearances of such conflicts (e.g., they do not provide compensation to employees of the media), and they adhere to the highest standards of professional honesty (e.g., they acknowledge paid advertising).

11. Research Ethics

Protecting the human subjects involved in our research projects is a basic ethical tenet expected from all RSS members. Consistent with the ethical principles outlined in the Belmont Report (1979)⁴, RSS members agree to treat individual research subjects as autonomous agents and take extra steps to protect individuals with diminished autonomy. They also work to promote beneficence by avoiding research that places human subjects at any undue mental or physical risk, and utilizing research designs and data collection and management practices that maximize the benefits and minimize risks to research subjects and society at large. Finally, they take steps to ensure that their research fairly distributes the risk and benefits of their research to all members of society, particularly avoiding practices that might exploit socially marginal or vulnerable groups and individuals.

⁴ National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research. 1979. The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research. Available online at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report>.

Protecting research subjects is typically guided by policies and procedures formulated by the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) or equivalent bodies at academic institutions and/or government agencies. These policies provide guidelines for ensuring that research subjects are able to make informed decisions to participate in research projects (informed consent) and that researchers protect the confidentiality of information obtained from their research subjects (confidentiality). While specific requirements of different institutional IRBs may vary, all RSS members are expected to follow the principles and expectations outlined in the sections on Informed Consent and Confidentiality described below.

Even when they work at institutions without active IRBs, all RSS members are expected to follow the guidelines and principles outlined in this document. They should seek and obtain approval from a recognized IRB or another authoritative body with expertise on the ethics of research before engaging in research that involves human subjects.

12. Informed Consent

Informed consent is a basic ethical tenet of scientific research on human populations. RSS members do not involve a human being as a subject in research without the informed consent of the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative. RSS members recognize the possibility of undue influence or subtle pressures on subjects that may derive from researchers' expertise or authority, and they take this into account in designing informed consent procedures.

12.1. Scope of Informed Consent

- a) RSS members conducting research that will be used in publications obtain consent from research participants or their legally authorized representatives (1) when data are collected from research participants through any form of communication, interaction, or intervention; or (2) when behavior of research participants occurs in a private context where an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or reporting is taking place.
- b) Despite the paramount importance of consent, RSS members may seek waivers of this standard when (1) the research involves no more than minimal risk for research participants, and (2) the research could not practicably be carried out were informed consent to be required. RSS members recognize that waivers of consent require approval from institutional review boards or, in the absence of such boards, from another authoritative body with expertise on the ethics of research. Under such circumstances, the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information must be maintained unless otherwise set forth in 13.2(b).
- c) RSS members may conduct research in public places or use publicly available information about individuals (e.g., naturalistic observations in public places, analysis of public records, or archival research) without obtaining consent. If, under such circumstances, RSS members have any doubt whatsoever about the need for informed consent, they consult with institutional review boards or, in the absence of such boards, with another authoritative body with expertise on the ethics of research before proceeding with such research.
- d) In undertaking research with vulnerable populations (e.g., youth, recent immigrant populations, the mentally ill), RSS members take special care to ensure that the voluntary nature of the research is understood and that consent is not coerced. In all other respects, RSS members adhere to the principles set forth in 12.1(a)-(c).
- e) RSS members are familiar with and conform to applicable state and federal regulations and, where applicable, institutional review board requirements for obtaining informed consent for research.

12.2. Informed Consent Process

- a) When informed consent is required, RSS members enter into an agreement with research participants or their legal representatives that clarifies the nature of the research and the responsibilities of the investigator prior to conducting the research.
- b) When informed consent is required, RSS members use language that is understandable to and respectful of research participants or their legal representatives.
- c) When informed consent is required, RSS members provide research participants or their legal representatives with the opportunity to ask questions about any aspect of the research, at any time during or after their participation in the research.
- d) When informed consent is required, RSS members inform research participants or their legal representatives of the nature of the research; they indicate to participants that their participation or continued participation is voluntary; they inform participants of significant factors that may be expected to influence their willingness to participate (e.g., possible risks and benefits of their participation); and they explain other aspects of the research and respond to questions from prospective participants. Also, if relevant, RSS members explain that refusal to participate or withdrawal from participation in the research involves no penalty, and they explain any foreseeable consequences of declining or withdrawing. RSS members explicitly discuss confidentiality and, if applicable, the extent to which confidentiality may be limited as set forth in 13.2(b).
- e) When informed consent is required, RSS members keep records regarding said consent. They recognize that consent is a process that involves oral and/or written consent.
- f) RSS members honor all commitments they have made to research participants as part of the informed consent process except where unanticipated circumstances demand otherwise as set forth in 13.2(b).

12.3. Informed Consent of Students and Subordinates

When undertaking research at their own institutions or organizations with research participants who are students or subordinates, RSS members take special care to protect the prospective subjects from adverse consequences of declining or withdrawing from participation.

12.4. Informed Consent with Children

- a) In undertaking research with children, RSS members obtain the consent of children to participate, to the extent that they are capable of providing such consent, except under circumstances where consent may not be required as set forth in 12.01(b).
- b) In undertaking research with children, RSS members obtain the consent of a parent or a legally authorized guardian. RSS members may seek waivers of parental or guardian consent when (1) the research involves no more than minimal risk for the research participants, and (2) the research could not practicably be carried out were consent to be required, or (3) the consent of a parent or guardian is not a reasonable requirement to protect the child (e.g., neglected or abused children).
- c) RSS members recognize that waivers of consent from a child and a parent or guardian require approval from institutional review boards or, in the absence of such boards, from another authoritative body with expertise on the ethics of research. Under such circumstances, the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information must be maintained unless otherwise set forth in 13.2(b).

12.5. Use of Deception in Research

- a) RSS members do not use deceptive techniques (1) unless they have determined that their use will not be harmful to research participants; is justified by the study's prospective scientific, educational, or applied value; and that equally effective alternative procedures that do not use

deception are not feasible; and (2) unless they have obtained the approval of institutional review boards or, in the absence of such boards, with another authoritative body with expertise on the ethics of research.

- b) RSS members never deceive research participants about significant aspects of the research that would affect their willingness to participate, such as physical risks, discomfort, or unpleasant emotional experiences.
- c) When deception is an integral feature of the design and conduct of research, RSS members attempt to correct any misconception that research participants may have no later than at the conclusion of the research.
- d) On rare occasions, RSS members may need to conceal their identities to undertake research that could not practicably be carried out were they to be known as researchers. Under such circumstances, RSS members undertake the research if it involves no more than minimal risk for the research participants and if they have obtained approval to proceed in this manner from an institutional review board or, in the absence of such boards, from another authoritative body with expertise on the ethics of research. Under such circumstances, confidentiality must be maintained unless otherwise set forth in 13.2(b).

12.6. Use of Recording Technology

RSS members obtain informed consent from research participants, students, employees, clients, or others prior to videotaping, filming, or recording them in any form, unless these activities involve simply naturalistic observations in public places, and it is not anticipated that the recording will be used in a manner that could cause personal identification or harm.

13. Confidentiality

RSS members have an obligation to ensure that confidential information is protected. They do so to ensure the integrity of research and open communication with research participants and to protect sensitive information obtained in their professional research, teaching, practice, and service activities. When gathering confidential information, RSS members should take into account the long-term uses of the information, including its potential placement in public archives or the examination of the information by other researchers or practitioners.

13.1. Maintaining Confidentiality

- a) RSS members take reasonable precautions to protect the confidentiality rights of research participants, students, employees, clients, or others.
- b) Confidential information provided by research participants, students, employees, clients, or others is treated as such by RSS members even if there is no legal protection or privilege to do so. RSS members have an obligation to protect confidential information and not allow information gained in confidence from being used in ways that would unfairly compromise research participants, students, employees, clients, or others.
- c) Information provided under an understanding of confidentiality is treated as such even after the death of those providing that information.
- d) RSS members maintain the integrity of confidential deliberations, activities, or roles, including, where applicable, that of professional committees, review panels, or advisory groups (e.g., the RSS Ethics Committee).
- e) RSS members, to the extent possible, protect the confidentiality of student records, performance data, and personal information, whether verbal or written, given in the context of academic consultation, supervision, or advising.

- f) The obligation to maintain confidentiality extends to members of research or training teams and collaborating organizations who have access to the information. To ensure that access to confidential information is restricted, it is the responsibility of researchers, administrators, and principal investigators to instruct staff to take the steps necessary to protect confidentiality.
- g) When using private information about individuals collected by other persons or institutions, RSS members protect the confidentiality of individually identifiable information. Information is private when an individual can reasonably expect that the information will not be made public with personal identifiers (e.g., medical or employment records).

13.2. Limits of Confidentiality

- a) RSS members inform themselves fully about all laws and rules which may limit or alter guarantees of confidentiality. They determine their ability to guarantee absolute confidentiality and, as appropriate, inform research participants, students, employees, clients, or others of any limitations to this guarantee at the outset, consistent with ethical standards set forth in 13.2(c).
- b) RSS members who seek greater protection to ensure promises of confidentiality can be honored may wish to use processes or documents such as Certificates of Confidentiality available from the US National Institutes of Health.
- c) RSS members may confront unanticipated circumstances where they become aware of information that is clearly health- or life-threatening to research participants, students, employees, clients, or others. In these cases, RSS members balance the importance of guarantees of confidentiality with other principles in this Code of Ethics, standards of conduct, and applicable law.
- d) Confidentiality is not required with respect to observations in public places, activities conducted in public, or other settings where no rules of privacy are provided by law or custom. Similarly, confidentiality is not required in the case of information available from public records.

13.3. Discussing Confidentiality and Its Limits

- a) When RSS members establish a scientific or professional relationship with persons, they discuss (1) the relevant limitations on confidentiality, and (2) the foreseeable uses of the information generated through their professional work.
- b) Unless it is not feasible or is counter-productive, the discussion of confidentiality occurs at the outset of the relationship and thereafter as new circumstances may warrant.

13.4. Anticipation of Possible Uses of Information

- a) When research requires maintaining personal identifiers in databases or systems of records, RSS members delete such identifiers before the information is made publicly available.
- b) When confidential information concerning research participants, clients, or other recipients of service is entered into databases or systems of records available to persons without the prior consent of the relevant parties, RSS members protect anonymity by not including personal identifiers or by employing other techniques that mask or control disclosure of individual identities.
- c) When deletion of personal identifiers is not feasible, RSS members take reasonable steps to determine that appropriate consent of personally- identifiable individuals has been obtained before they transfer such data to others or review such data collected by others.

13.5. Electronic Transmission of Confidential Information

RSS members use extreme care in delivering or transferring any confidential data, information, or communication over public computer networks. RSS members are attentive to the problems of

maintaining confidentiality and control over sensitive material and data when use of technological innovations, such as public computer networks, may open their professional and scientific communication to unauthorized persons.

13.6. Anonymity of Sources

- a) RSS members do not disclose in their writings, lectures, or other public media confidential, personally identifiable information concerning their research participants, students, individual or organizational clients, or other recipients of their service which is obtained during the course of their work, unless consent from individuals or their legal representatives has been obtained.
- b) When confidential information is used in scientific and professional presentations, RSS members disguise the identity of research participants, students, individual or organizational clients, or other recipients of their service.

13.7. Minimizing Intrusions on Privacy

- a) To minimize intrusions on privacy, RSS members include in written and oral reports, consultations, and public communications only information germane to the purpose for which the communication is made.
- b) RSS members discuss confidential information or evaluative data concerning research participants, students, supervisees, employees, and individual or organizational clients only for appropriate scientific or professional purposes and only with persons clearly concerned with such matters.

13.8. Preservation of Confidential Information

- a) RSS members take reasonable steps to ensure that records, data, or information are preserved in a confidential manner consistent with the requirements of this Code of Ethics, recognizing that ownership of records, data, or information may also be governed by law or institutional principles.
- b) RSS members plan so that confidentiality of records, data, or information is protected in the event of the RSS member's death, incapacity, or withdrawal from the position or practice.
- c) When RSS members transfer confidential records, data, or information to other persons or organizations, they obtain assurances that the recipients of the records, data, or information will employ measures to protect confidentiality at least equal to those originally pledged.

14. Research Planning, Implementation, and Dissemination

RSS members have an obligation to promote the integrity of research and to ensure that they comply with the ethical tenets of science in the planning, implementation, and dissemination of research. They do so to advance knowledge, to minimize the possibility that results will be misleading, and to protect the rights of research participants.

14.1. Planning and Implementation

- a) In planning and implementing research, RSS members minimize the possibility that results will be misleading.
- b) RSS members take steps to implement protections for the rights and welfare of research participants and other persons affected by the research.
- c) In their research, RSS members do not encourage activities or themselves behave in ways that are health- or life-threatening to research participants or others.

- d) In planning and implementing research, RSS members consult those with expertise concerning any special population under investigation or likely to be affected.
- e) In planning and implementing research, RSS members consider its ethical acceptability as set forth in the Code of Ethics. If the best ethical practice is unclear, RSS members consult with institutional review boards or, in the absence of such review processes, with another authoritative body with expertise on the ethics of research.
- f) RSS members are responsible for the ethical conduct of research conducted by them or by others under their supervision or authority.

14.2. Unanticipated Research Opportunities

If during the course of teaching, practice, service, or non-professional activities, RSS members determine that they wish to undertake research that was not previously anticipated, they make known their intentions and take steps to ensure that the research can be undertaken consonant with ethical principles, especially those relating to confidentiality and informed consent. Under such circumstances, RSS members seek the approval of institutional review boards or, in the absence of such review processes, another authoritative body with expertise on the ethics of research.

14.3. Offering Inducements for Research Participants

RSS members do not offer excessive or inappropriate financial or other inducements to obtain the participation of research participants, particularly when it might coerce participation. RSS members may provide incentives to the extent that resources are available and appropriate.

14.4. Reporting on Research

- a) RSS members disseminate their research findings except where unanticipated circumstances (e.g., the health of the researcher) or proprietary agreements with employers, contractors, or clients preclude such dissemination.
- b) RSS members do not fabricate data or falsify results in their publications or presentations.
- c) In presenting their work, RSS members report their findings fully and do not omit relevant data. They report results whether they support or contradict the expected outcomes.
- d) RSS members take particular care to state all relevant qualifications on the findings and interpretation of their research. RSS members also disclose underlying assumptions, theories, methods, measures, and research designs that might bear upon findings and interpretations of their work.
- e) Consistent with the spirit of full disclosure of methods and analyses, once findings are publicly disseminated, RSS members permit their open assessment and verification by other responsible researchers with appropriate safeguards, where applicable, to protect the anonymity of research participants.
- f) If RSS members discover significant errors in their publication or presentation of data, they take reasonable steps to correct such errors in a correction, a retraction, published errata, or other public fora as appropriate.
- g) RSS members report sources of financial support in their written papers and note any special relations to any sponsor. In special circumstances, RSS members may withhold the names of specific sponsors if they provide an adequate and full description of the nature and interest of the sponsor.
- h) RSS members take special care to report accurately the results of others' scholarship by using correct information and citations when presenting the work of others in publications, teaching, practice, and service settings.

14.5. Data Sharing

- a) RSS members share data and pertinent documentation as a regular practice. RSS members make their data available after completion of the project or its major publications, except where proprietary agreements with employers, contractors, or clients preclude such accessibility or when it is impossible to share data and protect the confidentiality of the data or the anonymity of research participants (e.g., raw field notes or detailed information from ethnographic interviews).
- b) RSS members anticipate data sharing as an integral part of a research plan whenever data sharing is feasible.
- c) RSS members share data in a form that is consonant with research participants' interests and protect the confidentiality of the information they have been given. They maintain the confidentiality of data, whether legally required or not; remove personal identifiers before data are shared; and, if necessary, use other disclosure avoidance techniques.
- d) RSS members who do not otherwise place data in public archives keep data available and retain documentation relating to the research for a reasonable period of time after publication or dissemination of results.
- e) RSS members may ask persons who request their data for further analysis to bear the associated incremental costs, if necessary.
- f) RSS members who use data from others for further analyses explicitly acknowledge the contribution of the initial researchers.

15. Plagiarism

- a) In publications, presentations, teaching, practice, and service, RSS members explicitly identify, credit, and reference the author when they take data or material verbatim from another person's written work, whether it is published, unpublished, or electronically available.
- b) In their publications, presentations, teaching, practice, and service, RSS members provide acknowledgment of and reference to the use of others' work, including conceptual models, measures, instruments and other research tools, even if the work is not quoted verbatim or paraphrased, and they do not present others' work as their own whether it is published, unpublished, or electronically available.

16. Authorship Credit

- a) RSS members take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed or to which they have contributed. These norms apply to grant proposals as well as to scientific publications.
- b) RSS members ensure that principal authorship and other publication credits are based on the relative scientific, professional, and substantive contributions of the individuals involved, regardless of their status. In claiming or determining the ordering of authorship, RSS members seek to reflect accurately the contributions of main participants in the research and writing process.
- c) A student is usually listed as principal author on any multiple-authored publication that substantially derives from the student's class papers, dissertations or theses.
- d) When engaging in participatory or community-engaged research, RSS members are encouraged to engage in conversation with key research partners early and throughout the research process as to their desire for co-authorship and/or acknowledgements within published and other project materials (e.g., websites, presentations), so as to accurately and inclusively recognize contributions to research formulation, conduct, and interpretation.

17. Publication Process

RSS members adhere to the highest ethical standards when participating in publication and review processes when they are authors or editors.

17.1. *Submission of Manuscripts for Publication*

- a) In cases of multiple authorship, RSS members confer with all other authors prior to submitting work for publication and establish mutually acceptable agreements regarding submission.
- b) In submitting a manuscript to a professional journal, book series, or edited book, RSS members grant that publication first claim to publication except where explicit policies allow multiple submissions. RSS members do not submit a manuscript to a second publication until after an official decision has been received from the first publication or until the manuscript is withdrawn. RSS members submitting a manuscript for publication in a journal, book series, or edited book can withdraw a manuscript from consideration up until an official acceptance is made.
- c) RSS members may submit a book manuscript to multiple publishers. However, once RSS members have signed a contract, they cannot withdraw a manuscript from publication unless there is reasonable cause to do so.

17.2. *Duplicate Publication of Data*

When RSS members publish data or findings that they have previously published elsewhere, they accompany these publications by proper acknowledgment.

17.3. *Responsibilities of Editors*

- a) When serving as editors of journals or book series, RSS members are fair in the application of standards and operate without personal or ideological favoritism or malice. As editors, RSS members are cognizant of any potential conflicts of interest.
- b) When serving as editors of journals or book series, RSS members ensure the confidential nature of the review process and supervise editorial office staff, including students, in accordance with practices that maintain confidentiality.
- c) When serving as editors of journals or book series, RSS members are bound to publish all manuscripts accepted for publication unless major errors or ethical
- d) violations are discovered after acceptance (e.g., plagiarism or scientific misconduct).
- e) When serving as editors of journals or book series, RSS members ensure the anonymity of reviewers unless they otherwise receive permission from reviewers to reveal their identity. Editors ensure that their staff conform to this practice.
- f) When serving as journal editors, RSS members ensure the anonymity of authors unless and until a manuscript is accepted for publication or unless the established practices of the journal are known to be otherwise.
- g) When serving as journal editors, RSS members take steps to provide for the timely review of all manuscripts and respond promptly to inquiries about the status of the review.

18. Responsibilities of Reviewers

- a) In reviewing material submitted for publication, grant support, or other evaluation purposes, RSS members respect the confidentiality of the process and the proprietary rights in such information of those who submitted it.
- b) RSS members disclose conflicts of interest or decline requests for reviews of the work of others where conflicts of interest are involved.

- c) RSS members decline requests for reviews of the work of others when they believe that the review process may be biased or when they have questions about the integrity of the process.
- d) If asked to review a manuscript, book, or proposal they have previously reviewed, RSS members make it known to the person making the request (e.g., editor, program officer) unless it is clear that they are being asked to provide a reappraisal.

19. Education, Teaching, and Training

As teachers, supervisors, and trainers, RSS members follow the highest ethical standards to ensure the quality of sociological education and the integrity of the teacher-student relationship.

19.1. Administration of Education Programs

- a) RSS members who are responsible for education and training programs seek to ensure that the programs are competently designed, provide the proper experiences, and meet all goals for which claims are made by the program.
- b) RSS members responsible for education and training programs seek to ensure that there is an accurate description of the program content, training goals and objectives, and requirements that must be met for satisfactory completion of the program.
- c) RSS members responsible for education and training programs take steps to ensure that graduate assistants and temporary instructors have the substantive knowledge required to teach courses and the teaching skills needed to facilitate student learning.
- d) RSS members responsible for education and training programs have an obligation to ensure that ethics are taught to their graduate students as part of their professional preparation.

19.2. Teaching and Training

- a) RSS members conscientiously perform their teaching responsibilities. They have appropriate skills and knowledge or are receiving appropriate training.
- b) RSS members provide accurate information at the outset about their courses, particularly regarding the subject matter to be covered, bases for evaluation, and the nature of course experiences.
- c) RSS members make decisions concerning textbooks, course content, course requirements, and grading solely on the basis of educational criteria without regard for financial or other incentives.
- d) RSS members provide proper training and supervision to their teaching assistants and other teaching trainees and take reasonable steps to ensure that such persons perform these teaching responsibilities responsibly, competently, and ethically.
- e) RSS members do not permit personal animosities or intellectual differences with colleagues to foreclose students' or supervisees' access to these colleagues or to interfere with student or supervisee learning, academic progress, or professional development.

20. Contractual and Consulting Services

- a) RSS members undertake grants, contracts, or consultation only when they are knowledgeable about the substance, methods, and techniques they plan to use or have a plan for incorporating appropriate expertise.
- b) In undertaking grants, contracts, or consultation, RSS members base the results of their professional work on appropriate information and techniques.
- c) When financial support for a project has been accepted under a grant, contract, or consultation, RSS members make reasonable efforts to complete the proposed work on schedule.

- d) In undertaking grants, contracts, or consultation, RSS members accurately document and appropriately retain their professional and scientific work.
- e) In establishing a contractual arrangement for research, consultation, or other services, RSS members clarify, to the extent feasible at the outset, the nature of the relationship with the individual, organizational, or institutional client. This clarification includes, as appropriate, the nature of the services to be performed, the probable uses of the services provided, possibilities for the RSS member's future use of the work for scholarly or publication purposes, the timetable for delivery of those services, and compensation and billing arrangements.

21. Adherence to the Code of Ethics

RSS members have an obligation to confront, address, and attempt to resolve ethical issues according to this Code of Ethics.

21.1. Familiarity with the Code of Ethics

RSS members have an obligation to be familiar with this Code of Ethics, other applicable ethics codes, and their application to RSS members' work. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of an ethical standard is not, in itself, a defense to a charge of unethical conduct.

21.2. Confronting Ethical Issues

- a) When RSS members are uncertain whether a particular situation or course of action would violate the Code of Ethics, they consult with other RSS members knowledgeable about ethical issues, with the RSS's Ethics Committee, or with other organizational entities such as institutional review boards.
- b) When RSS members take actions or are confronted with choices where there is a conflict between ethical standards enunciated in the Code of Ethics and laws or legal requirements, they make known their commitment to the Code and take steps to resolve the conflict in a responsible manner by consulting with colleagues, professional organizations, or the RSS's Ethics Committee.

21.3. Fair Treatment of Parties in Ethical Disputes

- a) RSS members do not discriminate against a person on the basis of his or her having made an ethical complaint.
- b) RSS members do not discriminate against a person based on his or her having been the subject of an ethical complaint. This does not preclude taking action based upon the outcome of an ethical complaint.

21.4. Reporting Ethical Violations of Others

When RSS members have substantial reason to believe that there may have been an ethical violation by another RSS member, they attempt to resolve the issue by bringing it to the attention of that individual if an informal resolution appears appropriate or possible, or they seek advice about whether or how to proceed based on this belief, assuming that such activity does not violate any confidentiality rights. Such action might include referral to the activity does not violate any confidentiality rights. Such action might include referral to the RSS Ethics Committee.

21.5. Cooperating with Ethics Committees

RSS members cooperate in ethics investigations, proceedings, and resulting requirements of the Rural Sociological Society. In doing so, they make reasonable efforts to resolve any issues of confidentiality. Failure to cooperate may be an ethics violation.

21.6. Improper Complaints

RSS members do not file or encourage the filing of ethics complaints that are frivolous and are intended to harm the alleged violator rather than to protect the integrity of the discipline and the public.

21.7. Cooperating with Ethics Committees

RSS members cooperate in ethics investigations, proceedings, and resulting requirements of the Rural Sociological Society. In doing so, they make reasonable efforts to resolve any issues of confidentiality. Failure to cooperate may be an ethics violation.

21.8. Improper Complaints

RSS members do not file or encourage the filing of ethics complaints that are frivolous and are intended to harm the alleged violator rather than to protect the integrity of the discipline and the public.

APPENDIX F: RESEARCH AND INTEREST GROUPS POLICY MANUAL

What Functions Do RIGs Serve?

Taken from the RSS website:

Research and Interest Groups (RIGs) reflect the substantive interests of RSS Members and serve as an important avenue for connecting members with similar interests. RIGs serve a critical role in RSS including: identifying, developing, and recruiting for the annual RSS conference; planning special events, speakers, field trips for the annual conference; providing intellectual leadership in their respective areas; rewarding achievement through internal awards and recognitions; and creating opportunities for members, particularly graduate students, to network and identify colleagues with similar interests.

RSS currently has 14 RIGs. These RIGs are:

- Applied and Extension
- Community, Health, and Family
- Gender and Sexualities
- International Development and Studies
- Natural Resources (NRRG)
- Population
- Rural Policy
- Rural Poverty
- Rural Racial Ethnic Minorities
- Rural Law and Justice
- Senior Rural Sociologists [Elders]
- Sociology of Agriculture and Food (SAFRIG)
- Teaching and Curriculum
- Youth, Education, and Rural Vitality

According to the RSS Bylaws, the Vice President of RSS is in charge of matters related to RIGs, while the Business Office can answer questions related to finances.

Holding Annual RIG Business Meetings

To remain in good standing with RSS, all RIGs are expected to hold an annual business meeting to discuss RIG-specific activities or issues, approve plans to spend the RIG budget, and to elect their leadership. RIG business meetings are typically held during a designated time slot at the annual meeting. Some RIGs are exploring other options (such as organizing virtual business meetings just prior to or after the annual meeting) or holding their business meetings over a lunch or dinner slot at the annual meeting. If a business meeting is held at an alternate location, RIG chairs should coordinate with the program chair

well in advance so the location is in the program. If a RIG wants food from the hotel during the meeting, the meeting must be on site.

Selecting RIG Leadership

RIGs have varying leadership structures, including a single chair or co-chairs who serve staggered 2 year terms. Some RIGs have subcommittees for special activities such as paper awards or field trips. RIGs may also choose to have a student representative. Nominations or volunteers for leadership positions are typically solicited during the RIG business meeting. If enough members are present they may vote for the chair during the business meeting. However, if attendance at the RIG business meeting is low, a RIG may conduct a leadership vote electronically.

RIGs are expected to provide a brief report to the VP and Business Office after their annual business meeting regarding RIG leadership election results and other details about RIG activities.

Planning RIG Sessions for the RSS Annual Meeting.

RIG chairs serve as the core members of the Annual Meeting Program Committee (under the leadership of the Program Committee Chair, who is appointed by the RSS President).

One of the most important tasks of the RIG chair (and co-chair, if there is one) is to create paper sessions from a list of abstracts submitted for consideration for the RSS annual meeting. All submitted abstracts are organized by the business office and sent out to individual RIGs based on information provided by the author or an assessment of fit based on content. RIG chair and co- chairs are responsible for putting papers with a similar theme into sessions (typically 4-5 papers per session), naming the session, and assigning a session moderator (often a volunteer from the RIG's members). They return this information to the business office which works with the Program Committee to finalize the program. Note that the Program Chair(s) have the final word on the time and date for all sessions, but you can share any suggestions for timing or sequencing of sessions when you submit your list of proposed sessions.

After examining each paper's title and abstract, it is not uncommon for RIG chairs to decide that one or more papers may fit better in a different RIG. If there is one or more papers that do not fit into your created sessions, try contacting the chair of a different RIG that you think it fits best to see if they will fit in the paper. If all else fails, contact the program chair(s) and let them know you are having trouble finding a place for the paper. Sometimes, papers are hard to place but every effort is made to find a session for each paper submission.

Also know that some authors will withdraw their paper from the conference and others may be added by the business office to your RIG sessions to fill holes. It's best to be flexible realizing that your first attempt at configuring sessions will most likely be changed slightly before the start of the conference.

Communication among RIG Members

RIGs are intended to help RSS members with common interests connect, collaborate, and communicate.

RIG chairs and members have embraced this role in various ways. Some RIGs communicate with members primarily through email list serves and at their annual business meeting. Other RIGs are more very proactive and develop regular newsletters, maintain websites, or have a social media presence. For example, the Natural Resources RIG newsletter includes details about the new leadership, award winners, award guidelines, member announcements, call for papers, employment opportunities, and opportunities for graduate students, among other items. Chairs may also decide to communicate with members via social media outlets like Facebook and Twitter.

To facilitate communication among members of the RIGs, the Business Office provides RIG chairs with regular updates about the names and contact information for their active members. Most RIGs maintain a historic record of past RIGs to facilitate communication with (often temporarily) inactive members as well as those whose memberships are up to date.

While it is up to the RIG chairs, and their members, to decide what and how much they want to communicate with members, communication and activity are probably correlated with more active RIGs having more and diverse modes of communication.

How Do RIGs Earn Money?

Currently RIGs earn money through membership dues that are collected by RSS when people pay for or renew their annual membership. The Executive Director, in consultation with and approval from each RIG Chair and in consultation with the Executive Committee, will set and update dues associated with each category. Members will be notified of any changes, and the current dues schedule will be published on the RSS website.

Some RIGs have taken it upon themselves to solicit additional funds from individual or institutional sponsors for specific items such as a paper award or to bring in a speaker for a special session.

In recent years, the Rural Sociological Society's budget has included money for special events or sessions at the annual meeting that are proposed by RIGs. There are also funds to support activities at the annual meeting that promote the society's goals of increasing diversity and inclusion. As noted below, RIGs might plan events that require funds beyond the income they earn from membership dues – and can apply for RIG meeting activity or diversity enhancement funds to help cover these costs. Pay attention to calls for proposals from the VP and Business Office for these types of activities.

How Can RIGs Spend Money?

Each month the business office sends two spreadsheets to RIG chairs and co-chairs. The first spreadsheet is a list of members. The second spreadsheet is a current balance of how much money is in each RIG's account. RIG balances can accumulate over several years if the funds are not spent. Because most money comes from RIG membership dues, the RIG bank account usually see increases around the time that people renew their RSS membership (early in the calendar year) or when paying for registration to the annual meeting (summer). This can make it difficult to know precisely how much the RIG will have to spend.

RIGs are allowed to spend their budgets for purposes consistent with the mission and goals of the RSS and the specific RIG. They must follow guidelines from the Business Office about appropriate expenditures. Questions about appropriate expenditures can be directed to the RSS Executive Committee.

After determining how much money the RIG has to spend, the RIG chair and co-chair can begin to plan RIG related activities.

Below are some examples of what RIGs choose to finance:

Paper Awards

Several RIGs hold annual paper awards. These awards tend to include a financial award ranging from \$200 to \$400. The financial award is to help offset some of the costs of attending the annual meeting as award recipients are typically expected to present their paper in a RIG session.

Field Trips

RIGs often work individually or collectively to organize field trips at the annual meetings. These field trips are traditionally held on the Thursday before the official start of the meeting. RIGs could also co-sponsor a field trip and therefore share the cost. Field trip costs are offset by participant fees; however, RIG funds can be used to cover some of the costs to keep field trip fees lower. Field trips greatly vary in cost (depending on transportation used and fees associated with the destination) so it is best to plan for the minimum number of participants needed and to calculate a rough estimate of how much the RIG will contribute. The Business Office can help RIGs work out the logistics associated with field trips. It is best to contact the Business Office early so that they can maximize resources and make contracting processes efficient (for example, to have all buses for multiple field trips on one contract).

RIG Business Meeting

Some RIGs decide to hold their business meeting during lunch or happy hour and provide their members with appetizers and/or drinks. One benefit of doing this is that it tends to increase the attendance rate of the RIG business meeting. This is entirely up to the discretion of the RIG chair and co-chair, but needs to be communicated with the program chair so that the time and place is correct in the program.

Bring in Speakers for Special Sessions at the Annual Meeting

RIG chairs may choose to develop special sessions or panel sessions on a specific theme. In some cases, speakers in these special sessions may be RSS members who were planning on attending the meeting. In these cases, RIG chairs set up the special session but do not need to pay speakers. However, in other cases, RIG chairs may invite speakers who are not RSS members to speak at a special session or to be part of a panel. Typically, these special speakers are close to the annual meeting site and do not require travel funds. However, they would need to purchase a 1-day registration pass. RIG funds could be used to pay the 1-day registration fees for these speakers.

Guidelines for paper awards

It is up to the discretion of the RIG chair and co-chair to determine guidelines for a paper award. However, if the RIG has held the paper award in the past, efforts should be taken to keep the guidelines the same unless the RIG members vote to change a particular aspect of the award.

Some RIGs have chosen to create a special sub-committee to solicit papers and determine winners.

A good timeline to use is to announce the award in October (send the call for submissions to the business office so they can include it on the website and in the email announcements), set the deadline for submissions in early May and notify winners and the RSS Business Office by early June. The Business Office needs to have the names of winners by June 10th in order to get their names in the printed program book.

The call for papers should outline the paper competition guidelines (e.g. who is eligible, length of paper, content) and clear instructions for submission. If a RIG decides to form a new paper competition, chairs may want to look at the call for papers created by other RIGs.

Guidelines for field trips

Some RIGs choose to develop a field trip to coincide with the annual meetings. Traditionally, the field trip takes place the day before the meetings start. Below are several points to consider when planning a RIG Field Trip.

- *Develop a sub-committee.* Organizing a field trip can be quite complex and will include a wide range of questions and possibilities. The person taking on this task will need help.

- *Don't procrastinate!* A successful field trip encompasses many small details that simply cannot be worked out at the last minute. These points will impact everything from the budget, to informing the RSS membership, and returning from the trip with everyone that you left with.
- *Understand your budget.* Determine whether or not your RIG will use existing funds and/or charge a participation fee. If a fee is to be charged, consider the potential cost for students; some RIGs choose to subsidize students. Other financial considerations include, but are not limited to, transportation, water and/or snacks during travel, an honorarium for the host(s), and lunch accommodations.
- *Solicit member input.* The annual meetings of the RSS take place in a different region and city each year. Thus, the field trip options may vary greatly from one year to the next. Members may wish to addend a trip that is linked to a special session during the meetings, relevant to the meeting location, or something entirely different. Once a RIG has settled on a few potential trip ideas, consider collaborating with other RIGS who may have similar interests.
- *Strength in numbers.* Some field trip options may require a certain number of participants. The opposite may also be true in that each potential venue may have a maximum number of people that can be accommodated. Thus, it may be necessary to poll RIG members to gauge the number of potential field trip participants, and to decide if the field trip will be open to the entire RSS membership or just the RIG members.
- *Time management.* In choosing an activity, it will be necessary to determine the distance to and from the venue, as well as adequate time for the activity itself. If the field trip will be an all-day excursion, include time for lunch. Depending on the location and venue, the RIG may also choose to schedule in extra time for rest, site exploration, and/or networking. However, do not forget to return early enough for participants to attend the opening session of the conference.
- *Inform your colleagues.* Advertising the field trip, before conference registration is open, is an essential aspect of encouraging member participation. There are multiple venues available—RIG e-mail lists, RSS Facebook, and the *RSS eBulletin*.
- *Know your participants.* Depending on the activity, the transportation, and associated costs, it may be very important to know exactly who has signed up. Some members may have mobility issues and need accommodations. If a meal is included in the trip, it will be important to know about dietary restrictions, as well.

(Approved by the RSS Council July 26, 2018)

APPENDIX G: SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP PROPOSAL REQUEST

Any individual RSS member or group (e.g., Research and Interest Group) may propose that the Rural Sociological Society or a specific Research and Interest Group (RIG) within RSS become a member of another scientific organization. The individual member or RIG representative shall complete this form and submit to the RSS Business Office rssira@wiu.edu. The RSS Executive Committee will review the request and render a decision.

1. Individual and/or RIG Making Request:

Individual Name:

Email Address:

Sponsoring RIG:

2. Information about the Scientific Organization in which you are Requesting Membership:

Organization Name:

Organization Website:

Provide a description of the organization's mission or purpose:

3. Justification for RSS Involvement – Please provide justification for why RSS or a specific RIG should become a member of this scientific organization. How does this organization's mission align with that of RSS?

What are the expectations of RSS if the Society joins this organization? Please indicate if the organization requires an RSS representative. If a representative is required, (a) how will the individual be selected, and (b) intended arrangements for travel funds?

4. Potential Drawbacks to Membership – Please identify any potential drawbacks, controversies, or

potential harms to RSS that may be associated with joining this organization.

5. Organization Membership Fee Information – Is there a fee to join this organization? (check one)

☐ NO

☐ YES

If there is a fee, please indicate:

Amount (\$)

Fee schedule (check one)

☐ Annual

☐ One-time

Party responsible for paying the fee

02/21/16, Created by Development Committee. Approved by RSS Council at 2016 Mid-Year Meeting.
06/05/19, Modified by Development Committee.

APPENDIX H: RSS SPONSORSHIP CATEGORIES

The following are the categories for sponsorship at the Annual Meetings, which will be communicated to potential donors to Department Night:

RSS Sponsorship Levels and Benefits:

Rural Champion (Gold) Sponsor: \$2,000 and above

Rural Champion (Gold) Sponsors will receive the following benefits:

Marketing

- Table at the Exhibitor Fair (6 foot)
- Table at the Departments and Partners Night (6 foot)

Acknowledgement/Profile

- Acknowledgement in the Conference Virtual Program
- Acknowledgement on the Conference Website
- Acknowledgement at Conference Events

Registrations

- Two complimentary delegate registrations to attend sessions and networking events

Rural Partner (Silver) Sponsor: \$1,000 to \$1,999

Rural Partner (Silver) Sponsors will receive the following benefits:

Marketing

- Table at the Exhibitor Fair (6 foot)
- Table at the Departments and Partners Night (6 foot)

Acknowledgement/Profile

- Acknowledgement in the Conference Virtual Program
- Acknowledgement on the Conference Website
- Acknowledgement at Conference Events

Registration

- One complimentary delegate registration to attend sessions and networking events

Rural Ally (Bronze) Sponsor: \$750 to \$999

Rural Ally (Bronze) Sponsors will receive the following benefits:

Marketing

- Table at the Exhibitor Fair (6 foot)

Acknowledgement/Profile

- Acknowledgement in the Conference Virtual Program
- Acknowledgement on the Conference Website
- Acknowledgement at Conference Events

Rural Contributor: \$1 to \$749

- Acknowledgement in the Conference Virtual Program and Special Event

Non-Sponsor Exhibitor: \$500

- Table at the Exhibitor Fair (6 foot)
- Acknowledgement in the Conference Virtual Program and Special Events