

Potential Actions Emanating from 2016 Survey of SEPI Members

We electronically surveyed all members of SEPI in January 2016; 335 responded for a 55% response rate. Respondents were representative on the entire membership in terms of gender and nationality. Our ms summarizes the results, providing both a contemporary picture of the SEPI membership and, when possible, a historical comparison with the results of a similar 1996 study.

Here are 8 major findings from the survey and potential actions in response to them. Other interpretations and additional actions are, of course, welcome. This summary serves to get us started in leveraging the research results.

1. Survey results: Members were overwhelmingly satisfied with the overall organization, its journal, and the annual conferences. Members were also markedly more satisfied with the association in 2016 than in 1996. SEPI is far more international (40% outside of North America) than 20 years ago.

Potential actions: Stay the course; the current membership is satisfied with the recent directions of the organization and its governance.

2. Survey results: Seventy-one percent of members are psychologists, but the vast majority selected more than one professional discipline. From all responses, we calculated the percentages of the endorsed disciplines. In descending order of frequency, the endorsed disciplines were psychology (45%), psychotherapy (31%), counseling (9%), other (5%, which included nursing), psychiatry (4%), family therapy (4%), and social work (2%).

Potential actions: SEPI is not attracting many mental health professionals beyond psychology. More outreach, governance representation, and invitations to clinical social workers, psychiatrists, counselors, marital and family therapists may be needed.

3. Survey results: An outlier in the satisfaction ratings was the Regional Networks. The regional networks fell short of majority with only 44% satisfaction. The neutral and undecided option was considerable for SEPI regional networks (56%). The twin obstacles appear to be lack of knowledge regarding local networks and lack of networks themselves.

Potential actions: Continue and accelerate rehabilitation of the Regional Networks. Feature one network in each issue of the newsletter.

4. Survey results: A majority of members replied “don’t know” to multiple SEPI benefits and resources: Webinars (64% don’t know), service of the central office (60%), SEPI’s attention to non-north American members (59%), SEPI’s attention to early career members (58%), SEPI’s attention to student members (55%), committee structure (54%), opportunities to join governance (50%), and SEPI awards (50%). The majority of SEPI members either have not availed themselves of the resources or do not know that they are offered.

Potential actions: Better publicity, regular features in the newsletter, and more prominent use of social media would probably enhance awareness and draw attention to the resources. In moving

forward, SEPI needs to inform members more effectively and encourage the use of available resources.

5. Survey results: Women constitute nearly half of the SEPI membership, but only 14% of the fellows are women.

Potential actions: Personally invite women to register for fellow status next Fall when dues notices are sent; personal emails might work.

6. Survey results: Members were generally satisfied with SEPI, but not with our electronic/media presence. The SEPI website (61% satisfaction), the SEPI listserv (54% satisfaction), communication from leadership to members (51% satisfaction), and online conference submission portal (50% satisfaction). Satisfaction of only half of the membership is not a glowing review.

Potential actions: Prioritize these areas; devote human time and funds to correcting the chronic problems with the website, listserv, and submission portal.

7. Survey results: SEPI members were satisfied with progress on most of SEPI's priorities, but not on SEPI's advocacy for psychotherapy integration in the public arena (only 62% satisfaction). About 40% of the membership expressed dissatisfaction or neutrality with progress here; the members do not perceive sufficient success by the organization in advocacy efforts.

Potential actions: Now that the Public Advocacy Committee has been created, the EC will need to encourage and direct them in their activities.

8. Survey results: The predominant themes to open-ended themes on improving the future of SEPI centered on increasing the number of student and early career members, raising its public visibility, collaborating with other organizations, maintaining novel conferences, and expanding global participation.

Potential actions: Place graduate students and early career members on each committee; continue to fund awards for students and early career members; raise SEPI's visibility; diversify governance and committees; collaborate with organizations; expand global outreach. Long-term goals.

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