

Community Engaged Scholars and Teachers Community Guide

Last updated 02/06/2026

This document is a guide for CEST Community leaders to record and detail Community processes, practices, and policies. This is a living document and will be updated as needed as the Community evolves.

Any changes to this document must first be approved by a majority vote of CEST Council members present at any meeting where such changes are discussed. When major changes are discussed, it is recommended that the membership is notified of them and a period of time to allow for member comment is provided.

Community Mission and Values Statement

The Community Engaged Scholars and Teachers (CEST) Community of the American Sociological Association (ASA) supports and connects any sociologist engaged in or interested in community-engaged research and/or teaching. The CEST Community fosters collaboration, mentorship, and professional development across subfields and institutional contexts to strengthen rigorous, reciprocal sociological scholarship, pedagogy, and practice that contributes to sociology-community partnerships.

The CEST Community is guided by the following core values:

- **Reciprocity and Accountability**
We value sociological work grounded in reciprocal, transparent, and accountable partnerships with communities, recognizing community members as co-creators of knowledge and agents of change.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
We are committed to inclusive practices that center equity, attend to power and positionality, and amplify the voices of sociologists and community partners—particularly those from historically marginalized groups and communities.
- **Ethical and Methodological Rigor**
We affirm that community-engaged research and teaching can and should meet the highest standards of ethical integrity, methodological rigor, and pedagogical excellence.
- **Collaboration Across Difference**
We value collaboration across sociological subfields, methodologies, institutional contexts, disciplines, and career stages, recognizing that community engagement strengthens sociology through intellectual and professional diversity.

- **Mentorship and Collective Learning**

We prioritize care-based mentorship, mutual support, and shared learning as essential to sustaining community engaged scholarship and teaching, especially for students, early-career scholars, and those new to community engaged approaches.

- **Public Impact and Social Responsibility**

We believe sociology has a responsibility to contribute to the public good and support community efforts toward social justice, civic engagement, and meaningful social change.

Community Leadership

The term of all positions starts on September 1 and ends on August 31 after the specified number of team years.

Elected Positions

Position Title: Chair

Number of Positions : 1

Term length: 2 years

The Chair will also serve an additional year as Past Chair following their 2-year term as Chair

Position Requirements: The Chair must be an active member of ASA and the CEST Community at time of elections and throughout appointment length. Previous engagement with the CEST community through event attendance, volunteering on committees, or serving on Council is preferred but not required. The Chair should be a practicing/professional sociologist; student members are not eligible for this position.

Position Description: The Chair will be responsible for calling and attending meetings of the Council, communicating between the Community and the ASA national leadership, coordinating volunteer committees, and maintaining communications with community members.

Selection Process: All members of the CEST Community will be notified of openings for this position. The position will be selected via the ASA annual election process. It is recommended that the Past Chair also makes a targeted call to past and current Council and committee members to encourage self-nominations for the position.

Position Title: Past Chair

Number of Positions: 1

Term length: 1 year

Position Requirements: Active member of ASA and the CEST Community at time of elections and throughout appointment length.

Position Description: The Past Chair will manage the elections for the community. They will also be available for any questions/concerns the Council may have. The Past Chair will be involved in writing the annual report.

Selection Process: A Chair automatically serves as the Past Chair in the year immediately following their service as chair. If the Past Chair refuses their duties, responsibilities will be taken over by the Council.

In addition to the chair and past chair there is a Council that will be comprised of the following positions:

Position Title: Secretary/Treasurer

Number of Positions: 1

Term length: 2 years

Position Requirements: The Secretary/Treasurer must be an active member of ASA and the CEST Community at time of elections and throughout appointment length. The Secretary/Treasurer should be a practicing/professional sociologist; student members are not eligible for this position.

Position Description: The Secretary/Treasurer will be responsible for record keeping for the community and maintaining any relevant financial records. Duties include attending Council meetings, notetaking at Council meetings, maintaining records of who is on each committee, and managing the budget.

Selection Process: All members of the CEST Community will be notified of openings for this position. The position will be selected via the ASA annual election process.

Position Title: Student Representative

Number of Positions: 1

Term length: 1 year

Position Requirements: The Student Representative must be an undergraduate or graduate student and an active member of ASA and the CEST Community at the time of elections and throughout appointment length.

Position Description: This position is responsible for providing input to help the community keep student needs a priority. They will communicate with student members by chairing and organizing the Student Advisory Board. They will be responsible for scheduling, guiding, and taking notes during Student Advisory Board meetings. They will represent student preferences and needs at Council meetings. They are invited to work with the Council and community committees to organize and plan activities of the community.

Selection Process: All student members of the CEST Community will be notified of openings for this position. The position will be selected via the ASA annual election process.

Position Title: Co-organizer

Number of Positions: 3

Term length: 2 years

Position Requirements: Active member of ASA and the CEST Community at time of elections and throughout appointment length. This position is not restricted by membership status, meaning it is open to all members of the CEST community, including student members.

Position Description: Co-organizers will attend council meetings and be responsible for organizing and planning the activities of the community. Council members are also expected to participate on volunteer committees as committee chairs, as needed. They are invited to work with the Council and community committees to organize and plan activities of the community.

Selection Process: All members of the CEST Community will be notified of openings for this position. The position will be selected via the ASA annual election process.

Leadership Nomination Process

Elections are managed via the ASA office and follow the ASA election timeline as follows:

1. The name of the election coordinator, which in CEST is the Past Chair, is due to the ASA office by August 1. Eligibility requirements for nomination and election are described above.
2. The Past Chair leads a discussion during a Council meeting about possible nominees for community elected positions. This usually occurs around September. A general call by the Chair with descriptions of the positions and responsibilities goes out to the membership soliciting nominations and self-nominations in August. These persons are considered "potential nominees."
3. The Past Chair confirms the position vacancies with the ASA office by October 7.
4. Council convenes to discuss the names of potential nominees and creates a ranked list of people who should be approached. Those on this ranked list are considered "nominees" but not yet candidates.
5. Going down the ranked list, the Past Chair contacts nominees to see if they are interested in running for the position until the minimum number of candidates has been reached (for example, a ranked list of chair-elect nominees should have 8-10 names on it because you don't know who will say yes/no. Going down the list 2 at a time, since you only need 2 candidates for this particular position). Invites are made asking nominees if they would accept the nomination to become a candidate. The first two that say yes are your candidates, and those who are lower ranked may not be contacted.
6. If they say yes and accept the nomination they become a candidate whose name will appear on a ballot.
7. All candidate slates are finalized by December 1, the deadline for the Past Chair to enter all candidates on vendor election ballot site.
8. Candidates are invited to enter their biographies and statements on the official ballot site in early February. The deadline to enter information is February 28.
9. Community membership deadline for candidates to appear on the ballot is March 1. All regular ASA members whose membership is, and will remain, active between March 1 and June 1 of a given year are eligible to run for ASA elected office in that year's election.
10. The ASA elections open on April 14 and close on May 18 at 5 pm Eastern time.
11. ASA Office will notify all candidates with election results by May 21. It is the responsibility of the community Chair to announce results to their membership at this point.

Committees

In addition to the elected leadership positions on council, CEST will have several committees that will allow for additional opportunities for CEST community members to actively participate in community leadership. Ideally, each committee will include one member of the CEST Council who will serve as chair and act as a liaison between the

community and Council. Other members will be identified by putting a call out to all members of the CEST community as vacancies become available, unless otherwise specified.

Communications Team (2-3 people)

Currently, there is no communications team and the CEST chair has led communications, but the vision is that members of this team will be in charge of the newsletter and promotional materials such as webinar event flyers. They may also manage branding, social media (if relevant) and building connections between CEST and other groups.

Student Advisory Board (6-7 people)

This committee will be composed of student members and meet to determine needs and programming that benefit the community's student members. The committee will be chaired by the elected student representative serving on Council and will meet at least twice a semester. The role of the committee will be to provide input for students' needs, help organize and plan the activities of the community as they are able/interested. They will additionally provide and gather student feedback about the mentorship program and communicate it to the board. Each year, students who are nominated to run for the role of student representative but who are not elected to the position will be invited to serve on the student advisory board.

Webinar Committee (2-4 people)

This committee will identify webinar topics and speakers, organize webinars and help with webinar moderation. Ideally, the committee will include at least one student, one academic, and one person doing community engaged work outside of academia.

Mentorship Committee (2-3 people)

This committee will manage the mentorship program, including an annual call for mentors and mentees, matching mentors and mentees, and communication with participants in the program.

Timeline

Deadline or Range	Activity	Explanation
August (Annual Meeting)	Annual Meeting & Leadership Hand-off (if relevant) Annual Business Meeting	New leaders officially take over at the conclusion of the ASA meeting.(ASA Manual) Hold annual business meeting at the annual conference
August 20	Submit names of authorized listserv senders	August 20 Submit names of authorized Community listserv senders to community@asanet.org (ASA Manual)
August 31	Official members count taken	(ASA Manual)
(if meeting is not at ASA) Early September 2025	Conduct Online Business Meeting	Solicit member input on future direction and governance.
September	Communicate to Membership	Send out minutes and report after the business meeting, establish and begin a regular communication plan.

September 20	Submit names of authorized listserv senders.	Report the Listserv to community@asanet.org.(Part 2 Feedback). (ASA Manual)
September 30	Official members count taken (Start of New Year).	Baseline for the year's membership. (ASA Manual)
September/ October	Host Webinar #1 (Fall Semester)	Report Goal: Plan for four webinars total, with at least one focused on professional development (e.g., tenure/promotion).
October 15	Internal Deadline: Leadership Nominations Due	Used to ensure a full slate is ready for vetting before the official ASA deadline.
October 30	Secure Speakers for Spring Webinar Series (Webinars #3 & #4)	Essential for planning and promotion of subsequent events.
November 15	Annual Report Due (2025)	(ASA Manual)

December 1	Deadline to enter slate into the online election system.	(ASA Manual)
November/ December	Host Webinar #2 (Fall Semester)	Report Goal: Complete the goal of hosting two webinars in the fall semester.
January 15	Begin Data Review & Goal Assessment	Start gathering engagement metrics (clicks/opens) for the next annual report. Request ASA help with tracking metrics (Part 2 Feedback).
February 1	Election Candidate Eligibility Deadline. Award Nominations Due (Internal)	Deadline for candidates to join ASA and the Community to be eligible to appear on the ballot (membership must be active between April 1 and June 1). (ASA Manual)
February 28	Deadline for candidates to enter biographical information into the online election system.	(ASA Manual)

March	(in future) Award Committee Reviews & Selects Winners.	Committee must finalize award recipients. One webinar is ideally student-organized.
February/ March	Host Webinar #3 (Spring Semester)	
March 31	Voter Eligibility Deadline.	To be eligible to vote in the election, a membership must be active between April 1 and June 1(ASA Manual)
April	ASA-wide and Community election opens.	(ASA Manual)
April	Notify Award Winners.	Inform recipients so they can plan to attend the Annual Meeting. (ASA Manual)
May	Request for on-site reception due.	Secure space for the Annual Meeting social event.(ASA Manual)

May 15	Prepare Community Guide for Council Review	Review guide for possible revision and plan for membership input at the annual business meeting.
April/ May	Host Webinar #4 (Spring Semester)	Report Goal: Complete the goal of hosting four webinars for the year.
May/June	Open Recruitment for Next Mentorship Cohort	Start recruiting new mentors/mentees to formalize pairings by the start of the academic year.
June	ASA Office notifies all candidates of the election results.	Community leaders inform Community membership of the results. (ASA Manual)
July	Finalize Social Event Details & Program	Plan the reception/social event agenda and notify members of the exact time/location.
August (Annual Meeting)	Annual Meeting & Leadership Hand-off	Transition of new leaders. Hold Awards/Recognition event.

Resources, Activities and Events Outside of the Annual Meeting

Online Webinars

CEST will host approximately two online webinars each semester that align with the academic year. The webinar committee will plan these events. Recordings of these events are posted online and made available to community members year round.

Mentorship Program

The Community will host a year-round mentorship program led by the mentorship committee.

Newsletter

Currently the Chair produces a newsletter approximately twice a year. The vision is for the CEST Communications Committee to continue developing this newsletter in the future, as resources allow.

Other Activities

We recognize this community is new. The future vision is to add more resources which may include syllabus sharing, a bibliographic archive and searchable Roster

Activities and Events During the Annual Meeting

Each year the annual meeting, the CEST Council will aim to following (see the timeline above for timing of planning for such events).

- 1) Host the annual Business meeting. If it is not hosted at the annual conference, a virtual business meeting will occur within a month of the scheduled conference.
- 2) The Council will host a networking and socializing event to further build community among our members.
- 3) The CEST council will consolidate information for community members about conference events relevant to community engaged scholarship and teaching
- 4) Members of the Council will help facilitate development of a workshop or panel session relevant to community engaged scholarship or teaching to submit for inclusion in the meeting program.

Communications

The listserv will be used to disseminate regular emails to the community with announcements. Emails should be sent at least monthly during the academic year. This will be the responsibility of the Chair, though other Council members may send announcements through the list serve, as appropriate.

In the event that a newsletter is developed, it will be sent through the listserv and posted on the [community webpage](#) hosted by ASA as well.

