

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING THE NAME AND FOCUS CHANGE FOR THE ASC DIVISION ON CRITICAL CRIMINOLOGY

Revised: Thursday April 14, 2016

At the close of the 2015 Division on Critical Criminology (DCC) executive board and business meetings, held at the American Society of Criminology (ASC) conference, a proposal was put forward indicating that, given current events, in order for the DCC to be more interdisciplinary, inclusive, and timely, the DCC should rebrand itself to include social justice in its mission and name.

This motion passed unanimously at the executive board, and with 17 members present, at the business meeting too. Before making these changes, we spoke to Chris Eskridge, Executive Director of ASC, who would be responsible for introducing this change at the spring ASC board meeting tentatively scheduled for April 15, 2016.

Chris advised that, in order to minimize possible contention, we should subject this decision to a survey-type vote sent to the entire membership.

More importantly, Article I that deals with changing the name of the division and Article IX that deals with amending the Constitution, are relevant here. <http://divisiononcriticalcriminology.com/about/constitution/> Both require a vote of the membership.

This spring, in advance of changing the website, newsletter, etc. of the DCC, we will be making a concerted effort to inform the membership of this proposal. By announcing this development on our Facebook page, through a division wide e-mail, and our newsletter, we will then hold the vote tentatively scheduled for a two week period of May 21-June 7, 2016. (This window is selected to as to maximize voter participation).

Similar to the recent vote (Spring 2015) for a new executive, we will have a third party organization administer the vote. So, if you have not already done so, please remember to renew your membership of the ASC and DCC.

This question and answer sheet is intended to inform the membership and encourage additional discussion on this proposed change.

Question: What specifically are we changing?

Answer: Our division name, constitution, website, newsletter, banner, info tablecloth, and social media only would be changed to the *Division on Critical Criminology and Social Justice*. (With respect to the constitution, the words “and Social Justice,” will be added every time the expression “Critical Criminology” is used). We will consider whether we would retain the title of the division journal as *Critical Criminology: An International Journal* at a later date.

Question: Are we rushing into this decision? Why don't we wait to discuss this at the next business meeting in November 2016?

Answer: We are not rushing. The motion was passed during both meetings in November 2015, four-and-a-half months ago. Motions passed in the DCC business meetings do carry weight. It should not take an organization as small as the DCC more than a year to make this kind of change to its constitution. Taking a year to get closure on this proposed change is inefficient and has potential to alienate the membership. Having another vote potentially sends a message to the membership that decisions at the November 2015 business meeting were invalid. However, the immediate change proposed by the motion at the business meeting is in violation of the procedures laid out in our constitution

Question: Why do we have to complete the process by September 1, 2016?

Answer: The vote needs to be approved by the ASC Executive Board. We missed the spring ASC Executive meeting deadline and the next ASC Executive meeting is October 15. It also takes time to finalize the agenda for the ASC meetings. Therefore, the survey vote administered to all DCC members should conclude by September 1.

Question: Is it vital that the change be in place by a certain point in time? It would seem that given the lengthy history of the DCC as the DCC, we might proceed more cautiously, even if it means that we do not change the name until 2017.

Answer: There is no need to drag this issue out. If it takes an organization as small as the DCC more than a year to get some sort of closure on a motion that was passed unanimously in an annual business meeting, it will probably end up frustrating the membership.

Question: Where will I find communications from those who do not support the change?

Answer: So far those who do NOT support this motion have not come forward. Those who are opposed should voice their concerns ASAP to the executive in writing, and we will disseminate this widely through our newsletter, e-mail and social media venues.

Question: How will the vote take place so that it will be in compliance with the DCC constitution?

Answer: The nature of the issue requires a vote of the entire membership. The constitution specifically states this (Article I and Article IX). That is why we will be having an on-line vote in the late spring. Through a combination of e-mail notifications, the newsletter, and social media (i.e., Facebook and Twitter), delivered throughout this spring and early summer, the membership is being adequately informed that this is an important change facing the membership.