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A statement about your association with SPSP and what you would bring to the Board of Directors if elected (this can take a few different forms, but most people do a few short paragraphs)

Some folks with PhDs write grants to fund their research and buy themselves out of teaching. Historically, these have been the folks who present at SPSP. I have attended SPSP conferences pretty consistently since graduate school, and always come away inspired by new research and refreshed by seeing old friends. However, as grateful as I am to learn about their cutting-edge research, I'm just not that kind of PhD. When I left my R1 position, I applied almost exclusively to liberal arts colleges. This transition to a predominantly undergraduate institution has brought me great joy and satisfaction personally and professionally. I love teaching and mentoring undergraduates. It is an honor to be part of their transition from first leaving home after high school to graduating as young adults embarking upon their lifepaths.

The faculty at Austin College are an eclectic and talented group who share a deep commitment to engaging students with great teaching. We are incredibly fortunate that the College houses an endowed center for professional development around pedagogy, the Johnson Center for Faculty Development. This Center sponsors weekly programs ranging from hearing colleagues present their novel practices in the classroom to discussing the best ways to serve 21st century students. The faculty at Austin College consists of roughly 100 people. Unlike at large institutions where there are multiple faculty within each subdiscipline, it is common to be the only one. However, one is constantly exposed to thinking and practice from other disciplines. I have input from a physicist and a chemist about ozone depletion and climate change in my Environmental Psychology class, and input from a Religious Studies colleague about Buddhism for my Cultural Psychology class. When my schedule permits, this semester I attend an Anthropology of Food course and frequently bring insights to my Cultural Psychology class directly afterwards.

Moreover, the shared governance structure provides opportunity to be part of implementing meaningful change at the College. I have been a department chair, am currently a dean, and was involved in designing the current diversity graduation requirements. I have been part of reviewing and rewriting policies and practices regarding satisfactory academic progress, diversity in faculty hiring, and promotions for non-tenure-track faculty.

Working at this scale requires innovation, collaboration, and cooperation. And working at a liberal arts college means that this innovation, collaboration, and cooperation are largely focussed upon enriching the students' experiences so that they become engaged and productive members of a diverse and democratic society. These are the experiences and the perspective that if elected I would bring to serving SPSP as the Member at Large for Primarily Undergraduate Institutions.