

FAQ's for Panel Chairs

What duties are expected of me as a Panel Chair?

Panel Chairs have three primary duties: 1) Introducing the presenters in a session; 2) Keeping time during the session; and 3) Facilitating the Q & A at the end of the session, if time permits. Panels are generally groups of three or four presentations, with each presenter or group of presenters for one paper allotted approximately 20 minutes. Sessions are 75 minutes in length.

Should I give the presenters time signals?

Yes. Generally, Chairs alert presenters when they have 5 minutes remaining and again when 2 minutes remain, although you may indicate other times at your or a presenter's preference. Chairs should advise presenters ahead of time that at the 2-minute warning, the presenter should start to wrap up his/her presentation.

If a presenter runs out of time but has not finished presenting, what should I do?

You don't have to stop the presenter at exactly 20 minutes. However, if you have indicated to the presenter that her/his time is expired but s/he does not immediately conclude (say within a minute or so), you can and should kindly interrupt the presenter and verbally ask her/him to finish quickly so that the other panelists will have time for their presentations.

Can presenters in my panel switch the order of their presentations?

Yes. This can be decided by you and your presenters before the session begins.

Before the Annual Meeting, do I need to obtain information about the presenters on my panel?

A week or two before the Annual Meeting, you should email your panel's presenters and ask them to email you a few biographical sentences or bullet points for you to use in introducing them to the audience. Introductions should include presenter name, position, affiliation, and paper title – but they may also include very brief statements regarding the presenter's research/teaching interests, major publications, etc. If the presentation is part of a larger project, like a dissertation or a book in progress, that could also be useful information for the audience. You can also ask for a copy of the paper or powerpoint presentation, if you wish.

How should I introduce my panel's presenters to the audience?

At the Annual Meeting, you should plan to arrive at your presentation room at least 10 minutes early so that you can meet the other panelists and make sure you know how to pronounce their names, titles, etc. (The preceding panel should dismiss 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start of your panel.) Introductions should be brief. Some Chairs introduce all presenters at the start of the session, but we encourage you to introduce each presenter right before s/he speaks – to help audience members joining the session late to easily understand which presentation is underway at a given time.

What do I do if a presenter does not show up?

If you did not receive notification or if the person is still noted in the ACJS Mobile App as a presenter, then you should let the Association Manager, manager@acjs.org, know that the presenter did not attend and did not notify anyone of the change in schedule.

What is my responsibility in relation to presenters' media needs?

You are not expected to have any specific technology-related skills or abilities. Each presentation room will be equipped with an LCD projector and screen, and the audio/visual staff will be available for tech help. Contact phone number is published in the ACJS Mobile App. Presenters will need to bring their own laptops or iPads to connect to the projector. (PCs can connect directly, but Mac and iPad users will need to bring the appropriate adapter to hook to the projector cord.) WiFi is not generally available in presentation rooms and it is not a good idea to rely on live internet for any presentation.

If a presenter's DVD/CD/media clip malfunctions, what should I do?

Encourage presenters to test their tech before the session starts. If it malfunctions during a presentation anyway, instruct the presenter to continue with the presentation as best s/he can.

Should the Q & A occur after each presentation or at the end of the session?

At the end of the session! Please ask the audience to hold all questions until all panelists have presented. This provides a richer discussion time, and it prevents enthusiasm for discussing one presenter's paper from causing other presenters to run out of time.

What is expected of me during the Q & A session?

Given that all the presenters keep to time constraints, there will usually be a few minutes at the end of each panel for questions. As Chair, you will moderate the Q & A, which means you will call on audience members who have questions. You should also prepare a backup question or two about each presentation to ensure that all presenters are included and addressed in the Q & A. Sometimes the audience will be very excited about one presentation and ignore the others. It is appropriate for you to ask if there are questions for other presenters (and ask your own if there are not), even if there are remaining questions for the presentation that has already received questions. Further, if an audience member or panelist begins to dominate the Q & A, you should thank that person for their contributions and then redirect the conversation to ensure all are able to participate.

What do I do if the session time ends but the Q & A is still going strong?

Please be aware of the starting time for the next session. There is a scheduled 15 minute break in the program between sessions. Even if your session started late or there is great enthusiasm during the Q&A, you need to dismiss the panel at its scheduled conclusion time. This helps clear out the room for the next set of panelists to set up and prevents attendees at your session from being late to the next session.