

2020 Vice President's Report
Business Meeting (Submitted 4/3/2020)
American Association of Physical Anthropologists
Los Angeles, California
Steven R. Leigh, Vice President and Program Chair

Introduction

The Vice President and Program Chair, in conjunction with both President Anne Grauer and Past-President Leslie Aiello and undertook regular duties this year centered on organization of the 89th Annual Meeting in 2020 in Los Angeles, California. The Association has never met in Los Angeles, and because of this year's cancellation, will not meet in Los Angeles this year. Standard tasks related to organizing the meetings included composing and charging committees, receipt and review of symposium proposals, receipt and review of abstracts, notification of abstract review outcome, scheduling the meetings, publication of the abstract issue and the meetings program.

It is important to recognize the many contributions of our Program Committee, who worked efficiently and expeditiously to review symposium proposals and abstracts. Their efforts were remarkable, and key to sustaining and enhancing our professional standards.

Additional duties this year included work on meetings cancellation with the Executive Committee. Efforts to host electronic versions of presentations were also implemented.

Program Committee

The Program Committee for the 2020 meetings was retained from 2019. This committee is responsible for reviewing invited symposium proposals and abstracts, playing a critical role in maintaining the high scientific quality of our annual meetings. It should be noted that the committee requires that members be regular members of the AAPA.

Invited Symposia

Proposal submission and review process. Our opening date for submissions for invited symposium proposals was July 15. We received a total of 26 proposals by the August 15 deadline, including 16 podium proposals and 10 poster proposals. Symposium proposals were distributed to the full Program Committee for review. In addition, the AAPA Executive Committee participated in proposal review.

Review outcomes. Reviewers completed evaluation of symposium proposals by September 11. The review process recommended rejecting only one proposal: 25 proposals were accepted.

An accepted symposium subsequently withdrew, leaving 24 invited symposia scheduled. Of the 15 proposals accepted for podium presentations, 6 were accepted as podium sessions (in line with previous years), meaning that 9 podium proposals were accepted as posters.

Abstract Submission and Review

Abstract submission. The abstract submission system was opened on September 16 (Monday), providing nearly a month for submissions. By the abstract submission deadline (October 15) we had received a total of 1247 submissions, higher than the average number of submissions over the last six years (averaging 1137). Only meetings in New Orleans and Austin received more submitted abstracts. Several requests for late submissions were received and were declined.

Abstract review. Pairs of reviewers were assigned to each abstract and reviewers were given access to abstracts on 22 October, with a deadline for review of 22 November.

Almost all Program Committee members submitted reviews by the deadline. Subsequent to receipt of all reviews, abstracts with one or more rejection recommendation were submitted to a second round of reviews. A total of 63 abstracts (5.1%) received at least one recommendation for rejection. These abstracts were distributed to 13 program committee members for further evaluation. Following this second round of review, a total of 21 abstracts had received at least two recommendations for rejection. I evaluated each one of these abstracts, and determined that rejection recommendations were warranted. Authors were notified of the decision to reject abstracts on December 6.

Notifications to authors of accepted abstracts were sent on 7 December 2019. Following the meeting of the Advance Team in Los Angeles (23-25 January, 2020), authors were notified regarding scheduling for their presentations. Specifically, schedule information was distributed to authors on 14 February 2019.

Workshop Proposals

The deadline for workshop proposals was 15 November 2018. We received a total of 15 workshop proposals, all of which were accepted. Past-President Aiello handled the review and decision process, notifying authors of acceptance on 2 January 2019.

Abstract Issue

Following completion of the abstract review process, we initiated preparation of the annual abstract issue. Burk and Associates assisted with formatting and copy editing of the abstract issue. Proofs were submitted to Wiley on 4 February 2020, with the issue published online on 14 February.

Advance Team and Meetings Schedule

The AAPA advance team met in Los Angeles from 23-25 January 2020. The team included Lori Strong and Hiede Rohland (Burk and Associates), Graciela Cabana, Anne Grauer, Leslea Hlusko, Steve Leigh, Kristi Lewton, Chris Kuzawa, Scott McGraw, and Stephanie Meredith. The team composed a total of 46 sessions, complementing the 24 invited symposia accepted and presented through our review process for a total of 70 sessions. We assigned days, times, room locations, and session chairs to contributed poster and podium sessions. Information on this year's meeting is presented in Table 1.

Meetings Program

The first version of the program was developed during the Advance Team meeting. Subsequent to the meeting, we made editorial changes to the program (resolving conflicts, copy editing, etc.). We notified authors of schedules on 4 February 2019.

Meetings Cancellation

The decision to cancel the meetings was announced on Friday, 13 March 2020. Subsequent to this decision, we developed a way for authors to upload presentations (PDF versions, videos, or both). The goal was to allow some level of interaction and discussion. We notified authors of the availability of meetings uploads on March 23. As of April 3, authors had uploaded a total of 22 presentations.

Acknowledgements and Thanks

Our Program Committee did an outstanding job this year, reviewing symposium proposals and abstracts thoughtfully, thoroughly, and expeditiously. I offer my sincerest thanks to the committee members for their efforts. The committee includes: Amanda Agnew, Kari Allen, Ben Auerbach, Jonathan Bethard, Nicole Burt, James Calcagno, Zachary Cofran, Paul Constantino, Lynn Copes, Jennifer Cramer, Andrew Deane, Maureen Devlin, Christina Fojas, Rebecca Gilmour, C. Eduardo Guerra Amorim, Lauren Halenar-Price, Ashley Hammond, Donna Harrison, Geoff Hayes, Amber Heard-Booth, Brian Hemphill, Nathan Holton, Rob Hoppa, Jennifer Hotzman, Rebecca Jabbour, Jessica Joganic, Kent Johnson, Erin Kane, Claire Kirchoff, Myra Laird, Christina Nicholas, Heather Norton, Robert O'Malley, Alejandra Ortiz, Nicholas Passalacqua, Christine Pink, Stephanie Poindexter, Emma Pomeroy, Sean Prall, Melissa Schaefer Elizabeth St Clair, Claire Terhune, Sam Urlacher, Qian Wang, Timothy Webster, Katherine Weisensee, Julie Wieczkowski, Frank Williams, John Willman. The AAPA Executive Committee provided valuable feedback and reviews on symposium proposals. The Los Angeles Advance Team also provided valuable service to the association through their efforts in composing the meetings. Ed Hagen has been immensely helpful as our talented webmaster. Graduate assistant Kathleen McGuire aided greatly in meetings planning and execution.

We thank our partners from Burk and Associates, especially Lori Strong, for her efforts in working throughout the year on meetings planning. Also from Burk, Heide Rohland, Brett Burk, Cooky Basura, Jill Drupa, Tammy Liberati, and Mary Lou Robinson, assisted in numerous ways,

including handling registration problems, organizing volunteers, arranging invitation letters and certificates of participation, and sending out meeting-related e-mail announcements.

Special thanks go to our gracious hosts in Los Angeles, the Local Arrangements Committee, Kristi Lewton and Stephanie Meredith. We look forward to meeting in Los Angeles at a later date. Finally, I thank President Anne Grauer for her steady, consultative, and gracious leadership through the difficulties that we experienced this year.

Table 1. Information on AAPA meetings, 2015-2020

Meeting	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	St. Louis	Atlanta	New Orleans	Austin	Cleveland	Los Angeles (canceled)
Registrations	1552	1536**	1895**	1711**	1147***	n/a
Abstracts submitted	1080	1110	1346	1229	1121	1247
accepted	1065	1100	1311	1214	1090	1226
Symposia (submitted/accepted/presented)	22/22/21	25/25/23	29/29/28	26/26/24	23/22/21	26/25/24
Podium symposium sessions	6	7	7	8	7	6
Poster symposium sessions	15	16	21	16	14	18
Contributed sessions	39	35	43	51	41	46
Podium sessions	21*	18	17	22	18	23
Poster sessions	18	16	26	29	23	23
Evening poster sessions	0	0	3	2	1	0
Withdrawn papers (as of 3/25/19)	37	9	16	15	16	9

*includes half-sessions, **pre-registrations only, ***as of 11 Feb 2019

Appendix: Timelines

Event/Process	Open Date	Close Date	Reviews Complete	Notification Date
Symposium Proposals	7/15/19	8/15/19	9/10/19	9/11/19
Abstract Submission	9/16/19	10/16/18 deadline 10/22/19 assigned to reviewers	12/1/19	12/6/19 (reject) 12/7/19 (accept)
Workshop Proposals	10/15/19	11/15/19	1/2/20	1/2/20
Presentation Schedule Announced				2/4/19