**Guidelines for Session Chairs**

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# Sample Acceptance Letter for Paper Proposals (notify presenters by March 31)

Dear ...,  
Your paper has been accepted for the ....... session at the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association Convention to be held in … from October …., 20…;.  
At this point, you will need to join RMMLA or renew your dues for this year, if you have not done so already. Please go to www.rmmla.org where you can join by VISA or MC, or mail a check. Once you are a current member (processing may take 2-3 business days), your name, paper title and abstract can be listed in the session. If you have not joined/renewed by April 1, this year, you risk being removed from the program.

The RMMLA web site also contains "Guidelines for Presenters" with important information regarding convention procedures. Please note the following specific rules:

1. NO ONE may read more than one paper at the convention (reading one paper and doing a reading of creative writing is allowed). If you have had two or more papers accepted, you must notify the chair(s) of the session(s) you are dropping as soon as possible. If it is discovered that you are listed in more than one session, your name will be dropped from the session with the greater number of papers.
2. Papers may NOT be read in absentia.
3. All session rooms will be equipped with projector, screen and speakers. Presenters will need to bring their own laptops and VGA cable for MACs. It is suggested that you save your presentation to a flashdrive in case your panel wants to share one laptop to save time. There is NO internet provided or available in the session rooms.
4. Session chairs ensure that each presenter has the same amount of time to present his/her research. The chair has the authority to warn a presenter if s/he is approaching the end of the allotted time and to stop that presenter if s/he exceeds the time allotted.
5. ALL chairs and presenters must be current in DUES by APRIL 1, even those from a local host institution.
6. ALL chairs and presenters must pay applicable CONVENTION REGISTRATION fees, even those from a local host institution.
7. ALL presenters are eligible to run for chair of a session for the following year's convention.

The RMMLA site now accepts online convention registration. There is a tiered registration pricing schedule. Pre-registration for the convention will end on MAY 1. The regular registration period will end on AUGUST 1; after that is late/on-site registration. Rates and the online registration form is at www.rmmla.org.

RMMLA offers graduate student and faculty convention travel grants of $250 each; the application deadline is JUNE 1 by email to rmmla@rmmla.org. Application details may be found at www.rmmla.org under "Grants & Awards."

The preliminary convention program will be online by June 1; edits may be emailed by the session chair to the Executive Director, Joy Landeira at [jlandeir@uwyo.edu](mailto:jlandeir@uwyo.edu) until AUGUST 1, when the program goes to press.

If you have any questions at all, feel free to email the Executive Director at [jlandeir@uwyo.edu](mailto:jlandeir@uwyo.edu). The RMMLA web site at www.rmmla.org is always the source for the most up-to-date information on the RMMLA convention!

Thank you for your service to RMMLA!

# Session Organization

* Every session at the RMMLA convention has a chair.
* *[Please note: Sessions used to have an alternate chair, as well, but this position has been eliminated.]*

# Membership for Session Chair

* Session chairs MUST be current in Membership Dues to be listed in the Call for Papers and in the Convention Program. If the Session Chair is not current in Membership Dues by MAY 15, a replacement chair will be sought or the session cancelled.
* It is the chair's duty to remind all members of his/her session that they must be current in their RMMLA dues by MAY 15 of the convention year.

# Paper Proposals

* Each session needs a minimum of three papers, although four is acceptable.
* The chair reviews paper proposals submitted by MARCH 1 (or April 1 in the event of an Extension of the CFP) and selects (preferably) four of the best proposals. If proposals are few, the chair is responsible for soliciting additional proposals from among colleagues, from field- specific listservs, etc. If the chair receives an overwhelming number of very good proposals, s/he may request of the Executive Director a second section of a session. These requests will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis, but cannot be confirmed (a) until all sessions listed on the CFP have been accommodated and (b) until it is determined that meeting space is available.
* Chairs should NOT accept papers from more than two members from his/her home institution or more than two members from the same institution, unless the focus of that session is specifically related to the institution, unless it is the local host institution, or unless last minute cancellations force the chair to recruit colleagues into the session. Such situations must have the approval of the RMMLA Executive Director.
* Requests for sessions involving undergraduate students should be addressed to the Executive Director.
* The chair notifies all who proposed papers of their acceptance or rejection preferably by MARCH 15, but not later than March 31. Please select and notify your presenters as close to MARCH 15 as possible, as some members submit to multiple sessions and they need to know if and where they have been accepted. In the event of an Extension until April 1, please select and notify presenters by May 1 at the latest.
* If a chair has not received enough good proposals by early March, s/he may request an extension of 30 days maximum from the Executive Director. If, after the extension, the session is still not full, the Executive Director may cancel the session.
* If a chair has received too many good proposals for a single section, s/he may request an additional section from the Executive Director, however, there may be a delay in approval of the second section until space is confirmed for all original sessions.
* Chairs may present in their own session, but are encouraged to find another session in which to present.

# Waivers for Special Speakers

* Requests for waivers of membership dues and convention registration fees for a special presenter/discussant whom a chair wishes to invite must be submitted to the Executive Director by April 1.
* Waiver requests must be accompanied by a brief justification and a biographical summary of the proposed special speaker.
* The decision to grant the waiver will be made by the Executive Board.
* Only a limited number of waivers is available per convention and only one waiver is allowed per session.

# Convention Program

* The chair MUST submit session/presenter information to RMMLA by MAY 1 so that online program can be set in a timely manner.
* The chair submits this information using the PROGRAM FORM FOR SESSION CHAIRS link mailed to them. The chair enters the name of the presenter and the paper title.
* The information provided by the Chair on this form will be used to generate the print version of the program. Notices will be sent to all chairs of final deadlines for changes/additions to programs, giving ample time for them to respond. Once the program is sent to press, however, changes will only be reflected on the online version of the program. Organizers of special topic sessions should note that substantial changes to the original list of panelists may result in the cancellation of the approved session, since sessions are approved on the basis of the proposals and paper titles submitted.
* If more than one presenter cancels, the chair has the option of (a) cancelling the session, or (b) if notified early enough, contacting the author of a paper s/he was not able to accept for reasons of space (rather than the quality of the proposal) to see if this author will serve as an alternate presenter.
* Contact RMMLA with any questions - Executive Director Joy Landeira at jlandeir@uwyo.edu

# Computer Projection Equipment (Projector, Screen and Speakers only)

* All session rooms will be equipped with projector, screen and speakers. Presenters will need to bring their own laptops and VGA cable for MACs. It is suggested that you save your presentation to a flashdrive in case your panel wants to share one laptop to save time. There is NO internet provided or available in the session rooms.

# Scheduling Requests

* The Program Committee sets the schedule based on the session topic (trying to avoid overlap in all time slots), the anticipated size of the session, and special needs. Scheduling requests must be received by May 1 in order to be considered.

# Moderating the Session

* Prior to the convention, the chair should contact the presenters to obtain some information with which to present them at the convention. The session chair should also advise presenters of the time limit per paper (approx. 12-15 minutes each, depending on number of presenters to allow time for introductions and Q&A; see below).
* At the convention, the chair introduces the topic and the speakers, moderates the session, making sure that presenters have **equal time** to present **and** that time remains for discussion.
* Sessions at the RMMLA convention run 90 minutes. If a chair has three papers, that gives approximately 5 minutes for introductions, 15-17 minutes per paper, and 20 minutes for questions. If a chair has four papers, that gives approximately 5 minutes for introductions, 12-15 minutes per paper, and 20 minutes for questions.
* Colored 2 and 5 minute cards are available at the registration desk to signal to a presenter, if need be, that his/her time is running down. The chair has the authority to ask a presenter to stop reading if that presenter has exceeded his/her time allotment and is cutting into another presenter's time.
* The Chair of each session may recommend an outstanding paper(s) to the editors of the *Rocky Mountain Review*, who will, in turn, contact the presenter to encourage him/her to revise the paper with a view to possible publication in the print or online journal.
* The Chair of each session may recommend an outstanding presentation by a graduate student for the "Charles Davis Award for the Outstanding Graduate Student Presentation at the RMMLA Convention." Nominations are due by November 1.

# Session Elections

* At the end of the session, the chair holds an election for a new session chair and then submits the results to the RMMLA Secretariat by NOVEMBER 1 -- either at the convention registration desk convention or by email.
* For the new chair to be listed in the Call for Papers, s/he must be current in dues for the following year.
* The Call for Papers is posted on the RMMLA Web site by mid-November, using the contact information that on file for the new session chair. \*\*Members must make sure that the address / email / phone / fax given to RMMLA is the one to appear in the CFP. Changes to contact information should be emailed to rmmla@ruwyo.edu. Members may also log into the RMMLA web site, go to Member Directory, and update all contact information except name and may change the password.
* RE: Elections in Special Topic Sessions: Elections in Special Topic Sessions may be held IF the group wishes to be listed in the Call for Papers for the following year, but approval of the session is not automatic. Special Topic Sessions must be requested and are included on a space-available, topic-approval basis. See “Special Topic Sessions-How To” for more complete information.

# Chair Cancellation

Should the session chair not be able to attend the convention or fulfill the duties of chair, s/he should notify the Executive Director Joy Landeira at jlandeir@uwyo.edu immediately.

Regular/Permanent Session Chairs:

* If the session has been organized already, the chair should ask one of the presenters to take over as chair, provide the new chair with all presenter information, and then notify RMMLA of the new arrangement.
* If the session has not yet been formed, an email will be sent to the membership asking for a volunteer to chair the session.

Special Topic Session Chairs:

* If the session has been organized already, the chair should ask one of the presenters to take over as chair, provide the new chair will all presenter information, and then notify RMMLA of the new arrangement.
* If the session has not yet been formed, it will be dropped from the program.

# Chair Rotation

* To encourage new member participation in organizing Regular Sessions at the convention and to allow members to develop new directions of inquiry in these sessions, chairs should encourage rotation in the election of new session officers, such that no one person may chair the same session two years in a row OR more than twice in a five year period.
* The Executive Director may intervene and name a chair if the rotation system fails.

Former chairs may present papers in that session and/or chair other regular or special topic sessions