SEALS Guidelines for Moderators for Works-in-Progress Panels

SEALS plans its panels carefully, to ensure vibrant, high-level and respectful scholarly exchanges. Moderators are a critical part of ensuring the success of a panel. To assist moderators, we have developed a set of policies and expectations. Moderators should familiarize themselves with these duties; they're not onerous, but they will help ensure that their panels are a success.

For the works-in-progress (WIP) series, the panelists are expected to read one another's work in advance and come prepared to comment on it without a long presentation by the author. The idea is to get useful, substantive feedback from others in one's field. The WIP committee members coordinate submission and distribution of the panelists' work among the panelists so you need not worry about that.

<u>3-5 months before the conference</u>

- Email the presenters, introduce yourself and confirm each speaker's planned attendance.

- Give thoughts about how the panel should be organized, considering the order of author presentation, stating that time will be divided equally among the authors, and that commentary will immediately follow each author's presentation. Emphasize that author presentation should be relatively short to allow maximum time for commentary and feedback.

- Invite commentary or input on your suggestions for panel organization. If needed, you can consider a conference call to iron out the details but that is not necessary.

- Ask the presenters to share their works-in-progress with you and ensure that they have shared them with each other. It would be ideal (although not required) if you read the work so you could be involved in Q&A and commentary as well.

<u>One month before the conference</u>

- Confirm each panelist's attendance and ensure their paper has been submitted to the group. If any problems arise, contact the panel committee immediately.

- Inquire whether any panelist requires technology as part of the presentation. Presentation rooms are fitted with slide projectors and screens. However, any presenter wanting to use technology such as PowerPoint must furnish a computer to hook up to the projector. Because of the cost involved, SEALS is not able to provide more elaborate technology, such as video recording.

- Obtain brief bios on the speakers so you can introduce them. Consider (and discuss with the panel, if you wish) how you will introduce the speakers (*e.g.*, all at once, or as the speaker takes his/her turn). Make the introductions as brief as possible to allow maximum time for commentary.

In the room

- Show up early to make sure the set-up is ready and the table clean.
- Confirm any order/time arrangements you made before the conference
- Remind the speakers of their obligations to keep their presentations focused, scholarly and respectful.

During the presentation

- Start the presentations on time. End the panel on time.
- Keep each panelist on time. Often, moderators use informal time-cards they pass to the speaker, as needed.
- When the discussion begins make sure speaking time and opportunities are divided up fairly. Animated, dynamic discussion is expected and encouraged, but it's important for the moderator to make sure of the following:
    - Nobody monopolizes the conversation
    - Nobody talks over anyone or cuts anyone off
    - The discussion remains respectful and appropriate
    - Audience questioners do not ramble and rob other audience members of the chance to participate

These last items constitute the most important part of your responsibility. Once speakers are "off-script" they may be tempted to focus less on scholarly arguments and more on personalized, non-scholarly observations, and to attempt to monopolize or control the conversation. It is crucial for the moderator to keep the conversation balanced (between speakers and between speakers and the audience), appropriate and civil.