



American Philosophical Association

**Guide for
Meeting Participants**

About this Guide

Each APA meeting and each individual meeting session is different. We have put together this guide to provide some general information for speakers, commentators, and session chairs on what to expect and what is expected of you. The guide also includes general information for all meeting attendees. Our goal is to help everyone involved have the most productive and enjoyable meeting experience possible.

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General Information

Registration

Meeting registration normally opens at least 90 days prior to each meeting. When registration opens, all APA members and meeting participants will receive an email notification, and announcements will be posted on the APA website and social media.

All meeting participants, including invited speakers and group session participants, are required to register for the meeting.

Registration rates for each meeting are posted on the APA website. You need not be an APA member to register for and attend a meeting, but members receive a significant discount. Student and K-12 teacher members receive an even more significant discount. Discounted early bird registration rates are available until two to three weeks before each meeting begins.

The APA also offers partial registration fee waivers to unemployed and underemployed philosophers, including retirees on a fixed income, who are APA members. To request a fee waiver, contact meetings@apaonline.org. You will be required to submit a letter attesting to your un(der)employed status. Waivers are only available for early bird registration; no waivers will be granted after the early bird registration deadline (normally two to three weeks before a meeting).

The APA does not offer refunds on meeting registration fees. Registration is available on-site for those who are unsure in advance whether they will be able to attend.

It is especially important that program participants, particularly those in the first sessions of the meeting, register during the early-bird period. There is always a rush at the registration desks just before the first sessions; early-bird registrants can use our speedy check-in lines, but if you did not register during the early-bird period, you will have to wait in the on-site registration lines, which may delay you in getting to your session.

Name Badges

All those attending the meeting are required to wear their registration name badges at all times while participating in meeting activities.

Anyone found not wearing a registration name badge will be asked to provide proof of registration; participants who are unable to show proof of registration will be required to register or to leave the meeting immediately. Replacement name badges are available at the registration desks for a \$5 fee.

Meeting Program

A PDF version of the meeting program appears on the APA website at the time registration opens, and updates are made to the PDF program up until the meeting begins. The PDF program does not include session locations.

Paper programs are provided at the registration desk to registrants who elect to receive them (there is a discount at registration for opting not to receive a paper program). Paper programs include session locations. Replacement paper programs are available at the registration desks for a \$5 fee.

Session locations are provided in the paper program and the meeting app only.

Mobile Meeting App

The APA provides a mobile meeting guide through the [Guidebook](#) app (available in the iTunes App Store and the Google Play Store as well as via the web) for each meeting. All registered participants receive

information about the app, including the access code required to download APA content, via email in advance of the meeting.

The meeting guide will be available at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Session locations do not appear in the app until the morning the meeting begins.

Be sure to enable push notifications in the app so you don't miss important announcements during the meeting.

Child and Dependent Care

Subsidies for child and dependent care are available. To request a subsidy, contact the secretary-treasurer of the division hosting the meeting. The deadline for requesting child and dependent care subsidies will appear on the meeting webpage.

Accessibility Accommodations

The meeting registration form includes a field to indicate that you'd like to be contacted about an accessibility accommodation. Do so when you register, and our meeting staff will follow up with you within one week to discuss the accommodation(s) needed and to make arrangements. You may also request an accessibility accommodation by contacting the APA meeting staff at meetings@apaonline.org.

The APA is committed to making the meeting as accessible as possible and will work directly with you to ensure that your needs are met. In order to ensure accessibility needs are met, accommodations must be requested at least one month prior to the meeting.

For accessibility at the Pacific Division meeting, please see that division's [Access and Diversity page](#) for a request form and deadline.

Key Contacts

The following are the key contact people for APA meetings:

- APA Meeting Staff: meetings@apaonline.org
- Amy Ferrer, APA Executive Director: amyferrer@apaonline.org
- Divisional Secretary-Treasurers
 - Elyse Purcell, Central Division: elysepurcell@apaonline.org
 - Jeff Dunn, Eastern Division: jeffdunn@apaonline.org
 - Becko Copenhaver, Pacific Division: beckocopenhaver@apaonline.org
- Ruth Chang, Ombudsperson Concerning Nondiscrimination and Sexual Harassment: ombuds@apaonline.org

Information for All Program Participants

Professional Conduct Policy

All authors of refereed papers must present their papers as they were refereed, without substantial revisions. Speakers, commentators, and critics in all sessions should ensure that their presentations are sent to other session participants well in advance of the meeting and are not changed substantially thereafter. Such practices as withholding prepared texts and changing papers to undermine commentators' objections are egregious breaches of norms of professional conduct.

All program participants are also required to abide by the APA's Statement on Nondiscrimination and by the norms of academic conduct.

Complaints concerning professional conduct may be brought to the attention of the secretary-treasurer of the division hosting the meeting. Formal complaints will be investigated and may result in sanctions.

Audiovisual Support

Audiovisual support, such as a projector, is provided only upon request. Meeting rooms are not automatically equipped with audiovisual systems.

Audiovisual support must be requested in advance of the meeting, prior to a deadline normally set at least two months prior to the meeting. The request form appears on the meeting page on the APA website.

Audiovisual support is a significant expense. Before submitting an audiovisual request, please consider whether another method, such as a handout, would be similarly effective.

Main/Divisional Program Sessions

Any participant in a session on the main program (also known as the divisional program) may request audiovisual support. The APA covers the cost of audiovisual support for main/divisional program sessions.

Committee Sessions

For sessions organized by any of the APA's 20 committees, **only the committee chair may request audiovisual support.** Session participants requiring audiovisual support should contact the relevant committee chair. The cost of audiovisual support for committee sessions is charged to the committee budget.

Affiliated Group Sessions

For sessions on the group program (also known as the affiliated group program), **only the group's designated primary contact may request audiovisual support.** Session participants requiring audiovisual support should contact the leaders of the affiliated group organizing the session. Groups are responsible for the cost of audiovisual support and will be invoiced by the APA for all charges.

After the Deadline

Because session locations are set in order to maximize efficiency and minimize audiovisual costs, **audiovisual requests submitted after the deadline, including requests submitted during the meeting, will not be honored.**

To secure audiovisual support after the request deadline has passed, groups and session participants must go through the meeting hotel's audiovisual services provider to arrange for audiovisual support and must do so **at their own expense.**

Handouts

If you wish to use a handout, be sure to bring at least 50 copies to your session. We strongly recommend that handouts use 11 pt. type or larger. **Registration staff cannot print your handouts for you.**

Information for Main/Divisional Program Participants

This section applies to papers on the main/divisional program, which is organized by the program committee. For committee and affiliated group sessions, consult the committee or group organizing the session.

Circulation of Papers and Presentations to Session Participants

Session participants and organizers should set deadlines for presenters to circulate their papers and commentators to circulate their comments to the other participants in a session. The following are the deadlines the APA recommends:

- The recommended deadline for main speakers to send the final version of their papers to commentators and any other session participants is a minimum of **six weeks** prior to the meeting.
- The recommended deadline for critics in author-meets-critics sessions (also known as book symposia) to send their comments to the author and any other session participants is a minimum of **six weeks** prior to the meeting.
- The recommended deadline for commentators and respondents to send their papers to main speakers and any other session participants is a minimum of **three weeks** prior to the meeting.

For author-meets-critics sessions (also known as book symposia), publishers send books to participants several months prior to the meeting. If you are a critic/commentator in such a session and have not received your copy by **four months** prior to the meeting, contact the session organizer and/or the other session participants. If that does not resolve the issue, contact the secretary-treasurer of the division organizing the meeting.

Session Structure

Session participants and organizers have the flexibility to set the structure for their particular sessions. The following are the session structures that the APA recommends. However, sessions can be structured in different formats by mutual agreement of the participants.

Colloquium Sessions

In colloquium sessions, each paper is allotted one hour for presentation, comments, and discussion. That time is normally divided as follows:

- Paper author: 20 minutes
- Commentator: 10 minutes
- Author reply: 5 minutes
- Discussion: 25 minutes

Symposium Sessions

Symposium sessions (including author-meets-critics sessions, also known as book symposia) are normally allotted two or three hours. That time is normally divided as follows:

- Paper author(s): 30–40 minutes each
- Commentator(s): 15–40 minutes each, depending on the number of commentators and session length
- Author reply: 5–10 minutes
- Discussion: 30–60 minutes, with a minimum of 45 minutes of discussion for three-hour sessions

Again, though the above are recommended formats, sessions—particularly invited symposia and author-meets-critics/book symposia—can take other formats as determined by the participants.

Posting Papers on the APA Website

Whenever possible, submitted papers are published on the APA website in advance of the meeting. For papers submitted to the Pacific Division, authors who do not wish to have their papers published on the APA website must opt out at the time the paper is accepted. For the Eastern and Central Divisions, paper authors must opt in to have their papers published online.

All papers for which online publication permission has been granted appear on the APA website approximately four months prior to the meeting at which they will be presented.

Information for Session Chairs

Session chairs are crucial to the success of the sessions and the meeting itself. We provide the following information to help session chairs—as well as speakers and attendees—understand the responsibilities of the chair.

Session chairs are responsible for the conduct of their sessions, introducing participants, and above all ensuring that the program stays on schedule. The overall goal is a good philosophical exchange; minor departures from the standard format (see previous section) are therefore acceptable, provided all participants agree. However, it is crucial to the program that your session be completed within the allotted time.

Session Chair Responsibilities

Before the session

- Familiarize yourself with the content of the session (papers, books, commentary).
- Check in with the session participants by email to discuss the session format and determine how much time will be allotted for each portion of the session (see standard session formats in the previous section) and, if necessary, in what order the participants will speak.
- Ensure all materials have been circulated to the session participants in accordance with appropriate deadlines.
- Consult with speakers about how to handle Q&A.
- Prepare a few questions or discussion prompts for the Q&A.

During the session

- Arrive a few minutes early to make sure you have time to check in with the speakers, verify the time limits and speaking order, check any audiovisual setup, etc.
- Keep time and alert speakers when their time is running out; if need be, prompt speakers to wrap up and cede the podium.
- If speakers are providing handouts, ensure these are circulated to attendees.
- Facilitate the Q&A (see below).
- Wrap up Q&A in time to allow for attendees to get to their next session.

Facilitating Q&A

Facilitating Q&A can be more complex than many people realize. The following are some considerations and best practices for APA session chairs.

- Briefly repeat questions, into a microphone where available, before allowing the speaker(s) to reply. This helps those who could not hear the questioner, may not have understood the question as originally asked, or were distracted. It also gives the speaker(s) a moment to think before responding.
- Come prepared with questions or discussion prompts in case Q&A is slow to start, lags in the middle, or needs to be redirected.
- Determine a procedure for calling on questioners. There are a variety of ways to handle this, but we recommend the following, at a minimum:
 - Keep a written queue of questioners.
 - Acknowledge questioners when you add them to the queue so that they aren't left with their hands in the air throughout discussion, which can be distracting to all.

- Pre-determine and announce limits on question length and whether (and how many) follow-ups are permitted. Enforce these limits forcefully but respectfully.
- Use the same method for calling on all questioners. Usually firm eye contact and a “yes” or “please” works well. For example, avoid using familiar names for some and not others, items of clothing for some and not others, and avoid using gendered terms, especially diminutives (“the girl”) or archaic address (“the lady”).
- Aim for diversity among questioners. Be sure not to favor questioners from privileged groups over those from underrepresented or less powerful groups (e.g., women, people of color, students).
- Avoid putting a questioner into the queue a second time unless all others interested in asking questions have had an opportunity to do so.
- Be prepared to forcefully but respectfully handle questions that are off-topic, disrespectful, overly lengthy, or otherwise uncondusive to productive discussion. Be particularly alert to biased or inappropriate language (e.g., referring to a questioner or a speaker as “young lady”).
- Keep time. Be aware of the time that your session is set to end and the next session is set to begin, leaving enough time between the end of discussion and the beginning of the next time slot for attendees to get to their next session.

For additional recommendations on discussion facilitation, review the [Guidelines for respectful, constructive, and inclusive philosophical discussion](#) compiled by David Chalmers.