

Jelain Chubb

**SAA Annual Meeting Task Force
Content Subcommittee Responses**
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Submitted by Jelain Chubb
Subcommittee Chair

Questions Posed by Task Force Chairs

1. What kinds of things do we think we are going to be talking about in our respective groups?
 - All of the subjects listed in the charge are worthy of discussion
 - Restructuring of the meeting schedule
 - Better way of evaluating satisfaction with sessions, etc.

2. What additional information do we need to do our work (and who should it come from, SAA staff, meeting planner, etc.)?
 - The data from the current survey should be very useful. If there is consensus that the meetings need to be shorter that could impact our hotel contracts. So we may need input from the meeting planner.
 - Breakdown of session topics and attendance over the last 5 meetings if possible, as with the roundtables, sections. Any other similar data on "special" focus session, research forums, etc. would be helpful as well. (SAA)
 - Other successful meeting models (SAA)
 - Associated costs (meeting planner)

3. What should we do to maintain communications with other SAA members throughout this process and make it "transparent"?
 - Encourage the membership to submit their concerns, gripes, and suggestions through both public forums (perhaps a blog) and in private.
 - Archives Listserv
 - Articles in the bi-monthly newsletter *— by all of us*
 - Communicate with roundtables and sections via their listservs or newsletters. SAA seems to be doing a much better job of getting word out through the regionals (MARAC, MAC, SGA, and SSA)
 - Solicit feedback at the regional organizations that meet in the spring

hashtag / subject line for comments

Additional Information

4. What do you like about past annual meetings and what changes (top three) you would like to see overall?

Like about past meetings:

 - Section and roundtable meetings, especially those with active participation and programming components are highly regarded. The Congressional Papers roundtable (which usually has a visit to an area repository and a dinner) CPR has been holding its own mini-meeting on Wednesday at SAA. The meetings last most of the day. Very little of the meeting is taken up with business. Instead, the roundtable holds its own education sessions and there is ample opportunity to meet with other congressional papers archivists
 - Business Archives Colloquium Similar to the Congressional Papers Roundtable, the Business Archivists have a colloquium on Wednesday afternoon at SAA. One comment:

"This gives us a chance to hear from colleagues (the practical application that I referenced in my first email) and to engage on a topic in-depth. Over the past four years it's been one of the things I look forward to most."

- Workshops are important for younger archivists and those needing to advance/improve their knowledge and skill sets.
- Networking opportunities
- Sessions where senior archivists reflect on the history of Archives or SAA (for instance the session several years ago featuring women who played key roles in SAA during the 1970s)

Changes/Needs:

- Members expressed an overwhelming desire for Wi-Fi access. Some suggested hardball with the hotels, others suggested including the fee in the registration or hotel charges. It was suggested that remote access or at least teleconferencing to RT and section meetings, maybe even sessions, could we charge a small fee for anyone joining a meeting this way? Quote: "Nothing drives me crazier than having to pay for Wi-Fi as part of my hotel bill."
- Too much on the schedule. Section and RT meetings conflict with other things, receptions and happy hours overlap, in trying to be something for everyone, have we somehow become more divided?

5. As for "content" – what are your initial thoughts about past annual meeting programs (say in the last 5-6 years)?

- Continue to promote diversity in the program and look for innovative ways to present material. Much like the complaint that it's always the usual suspects in leadership roles, we see many of the same people presenting year after year. Noted that there can be pushback from people unhappy their session was not included, by virtue of their role in the professional/organization. However, the usual suspects often have very well crafted proposals and deserve to be on the program.
- Eliminate Saturday sessions. Make Saturday, along with Wednesday, a roundtable and section day. This would give people the option of arriving and leaving earlier or later.
- It's impossible to know what the program committee is looking for and it changes year to year. A proposal submitted last year was rejected because it did not reach a broad enough audience; this year it was rejected because the scope was too broad. Very frustrating.
- Too many plenary sessions. Consider eliminating these in favor of more time for sections and roundtables. Look at the number of sessions offered as well.
- Themes – can help/hurt
- Sessions which include a non-archivist or someone who works closely with archivists, but who can provide a different perspective, everyone's always interested in partnerships and collaborating
- Sessions where presenters discuss strategies and practices that others can implement at their institutions seem to be well-received
- Jury is still out on the lightning sessions, but glad we're experimenting
- Something the regionals do really well is tours
- Pecha Kucha sessions