Chairing a Panel

What is a Panel:

1. Chair
    a. Organizes the whole panel / does the grunt work
    b. Organizes a meeting to discuss questions before the panel- we don't want panelists to be surprised by what we ask them!
    c. Keeps time, guides questions, prompts conversation, transitions to next panelist and next questions.
    d. Usually the most junior person in the group because this person has more time to devote to grunt work, and it's an extra line on their Vitae
2. Panelists
    a. Only responsible for showing up
    b. May be willing to meet beforehand to discuss questions, but not always.
    c. Answer questions posed by chair and respond to other panelists.

Submitting the Panel:

1. Check the Call for Papers and make sure your panelists know the deadline and what is required
2. Submit abstract, learning objectives, CE questions, and any other needed information
3. Collect all information from each panelist

When the Panel is accepted:

1. Confirm with all panelists that it has been accepted and provide whatever details you have upon acceptance (date/location of the conference, etc.)
2. Tips for emailing everyone
    a. keep emails as short and concise as possible
    b. use lists or short paragraphs with headings if there's a lot of info to convey
    c. take the lead – ask the right questions and be willing to make a final decision. If you're not particularly open to their opinion, just tell them what you will do and make sure they don't mind
3. Email the panelists
    a. Would they mind being spontaneous in the room or do they need preparation
        a. This is where you would talk about preparing questions in advance
    b. Let them know how long the whole panel is
    c. Provide them with time and location of the panel
    d. Provide them with your contact information and how best to reach you
    e. Ask them for the best way to reach them during the conference

Before the Panel:

1. Find out what everyone looks like in advance so that you know who they are. Try to meet them ahead of time if possible.
2. Know where your room is and make sure it has anything you need.

Original by Emily Kennison Sandoz, University of Louisiana – Lafayette , modified slightly with suggestion from Benjamin Watts St. Cloud University

3. Let your participants know where the room is and anything special they might need to know (e.g., we're in a huge room, or theres only one microphone so we will need to pass it around, etc.)
4. Consider preparing a "thank you" card

The Actual Panel:

1. Get to the room early
    a. Get all chairs arranged and copies of the questions in place for panelists.
    b. Make sure all the technology works ahead of time (if there is a problem there are always convention staff around, don't be afraid to ask them for help)
    c. Introduce yourself to panelists, remind them where you're from, and thank them for participating
    d. Be prepared to have anywhere from almost no one in the audience to lots of important people there
2. Talk to people in the audience before the panel starts. Introduce yourself warmly, then find out who they are, where they're from, and why they are there. Thank them for coming.
3. Start on time
    a. If someone is late, text them and let them know what you're going to do and then let it go
    b. Be flexible with things
    c. Do not ever start more than 3 minutes late
4. Flow of the Panel
    a. Title of Panel, what the panel will be about
    b. Introduce yourself
    c. Allow panelists to introduce themselves
    d. Keep time, monitor how long responses are taking and flow of the conversation.
    e. End on time, and help everyone leave promptly so the next talk can begin on time.
    f. When it's over, thank everyone for participating
    g. Talk to people after the talk.
5. Get ALL of your stuff out of the room!!!

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