

NeMLA Conference Session Planning Template

2025-2026 as example – Conference Theme: **(Re)generation**

Session Title:

[Insert Your Session Title Here]

Session Type:

Primary Area:

Secondary Area (optional):

Brainstorming & Initial Planning (Service Time Est.: 2-4 hours – Meeting with collab., organizational prep, emailing)

March – April

- **Create a shared folder** (Google Drive, Dropbox, OneDrive etc.) for essential documents:
 - Planning document
 - Email correspondence log
 - CfP draft & finalized version
 - Other relevant materials (sample CfPs from previous years)
 - **Identify potential collaborators:**
 - Aim for one post-PhD and one graduate student to enhance mentoring opportunities.
 - Request interest/self-nominations from previous participants.
 - **Meet with potential collaborators within four weeks of the last NeMLA conference.**
 - Example: NeMLA '25 was March 6-9, 2025 - Schedule meeting(s) by April 15, 2025.
 - Discuss/Draft a workload distribution agreement.
 - Graduate students may NOT be assigned the bulk of the work.
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Session Format Options:

- **Panel:** 3-4 presenters + Q&A
 - **Seminar:** 5-10 participants, pre-circulated papers, brief presentations, discussion
 - **Roundtable:** 3-10 participants, brief, informal presentations, Q&A
 - **Creative Session:** 3-6 participants, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, other genres, Q&A
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Timeline & Key Deadlines

April (Service Time Est.: 3-5 hours – Meeting with collab., draft CfP, organizational prep, emailing)

- Draft and send invitation to graduate students inviting them to collaborate on proposed sessions at NeMLA:
 - Send to individual graduate students, WiG listserv, GERMAN-CFP-L@LISTS.UMSYSTEM.EDU, H-Net, DDGC
 - Include bullet points that show opportunities for professionalization in a variety of roles and tasks; great practice for higher stakes conferences and professional activities on CV.
- Draft CfPs for submission to NeMLA.
 - Refer to [past NeMLA conventions](#) for sample CfPs
- Request feedback from peers.
- Check [membership](#) status (active membership required to submit a session proposal).

May (Service Time Est.: 2-3 hours – Emailing, Submitting proposals to NeMLA platform)

- Finish drafting CfPs
- **May 15, 2025:** Final session proposals due to [NeMLA portal](#)

June

- Early June: Notification of session proposal acceptance/rejection.
- NeMLA abstract submission portal opens.

Late June/Early July (Service Time Est.: 1-2 hours – Emailing, Submitting proposals to NeMLA platform)

- Meet with collaborators for next steps (can also be via email)
 - Allocation of tasks: Circulation of CfPs to listservs
 - Common listserv platforms for German Studies:
 - H-Net: H-German; H-Germanistik; CfPlist.com; WiG/FiGs; DDGC, GERMAN-CFP-L@LISTS.UMSYSTEM.EDU
- Circulate CfPs via listservs.

Late August (Service Time Est.: 1 hour – Circulation of reminder CfPs)

- Send reminder circulation of CfPs
 - Can have a discipline-specific reminder email, circulating all of the CfPs, or individually

September (Service Time Est.: <1 hours)

- **Mid September:** If you received few/no abstracts, send another reminder circulation of CfPs
- **September 30, 2025:** Abstract proposals due to [NeMLA portal](#).
 - Possible extension to mid-October (monitor NeMLA emails for updates).
- If you receive a high number of quality abstracts, request a second session: Submit a justification blurb for multiple session requests in the [NeMLA portal](#) (where you manage your session)

October (Service Time Est.: <1-1.5 hours – Writing acceptance blurb; Invite participants to join session via NeMLA portal)

- Mid-October, AFTER abstract submission deadline: Accept/reject abstract proposals via [NeMLA portal](#).
 - Reroute rejected abstracts for consideration in other sessions
 - Invite accepted participants and set a deadline for their response through the [NeMLA portal](#).
 - Remind accepted participants of the early and late convention registration deadlines and provide registration link, provide travel and hotel links ([NeMLA website](#))
 - Send links and deadlines for NeMLA resources and travel support:
 - [Graduate Student Caucus](#): Resources and Graduate Student Travel Award

- [CAITY Caucus](#) (contingent faculty): Resources and CAITY Travel Award
 - Manage submissions and monitor registration in the NeMLA portal

November (Service Time Est.: 1-2 hours – Drafting email to participants; Potential reorganization of session(s); Emailing potential Moderators / Auditors)

- Invited participants who have not yet registered: Send reminder re [registration](#) deadlines
 - In the NeMLA portal, invited **participants who have not yet registered will appear in brown**, and **registered participants appear in green font**
- Email participants with an overview of expectations, deadlines, and session structure.
- If you requested a second session: Assign participants to different sessions through the NeMLA portal
- Recruit moderators and auditors (graduate students can serve as moderators for professionalization opportunities).

Late January/Early February (Service Time Est.: 1-2 hours – Emailing)

- Registration reminder: Late registration deadline
- Send a reminder email covering expectations, deadlines, and presentation time constraints.
- Initiate discussion on a potential meet-up (send a survey/form to gauge interest).

A Week Before Internal Deadlines (Service Time Est.: <1 hours – Emailing)

- Send a reminder email about upcoming deadlines.

A Week Before the Conference (Service Time Est.: <1 hours – Emailing)

- Send an email confirming excitement, session details (time and location), and any final notes:
 - Request presentations be sent so they can be projected from a single laptop (this saves time during the session)
 - Request a 150-word bio if presenter does not want to use the bio submitted in the NeMLA portal
- Share [NeMLA Professionalization Opportunities](#) with graduate students and early career scholars

Conference Preparation (Service Time Est.: 1-2 hours - Collate files, prep hardware)

- Have all presentation files on a single laptop/device and in cloud as backup
 - Have all bios ready (either from participants and/or NeMLA portal)
 - Pack: HDMI adaptor, speakers (for virtual presenters), extension cord, adaptors/dongles
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Additional Notes:

- Keep communication clear and concise.
- Maintain a log of email correspondences for reference.
- Encourage engagement and collaboration throughout the planning process.

Instructions for Panel Organization and Moderation During the Conference

1. Assign

- Moderator (introductions, moderate Q & A, and/or respondent)
- Time keeper with time cards

2. Check Set-Up

- Arrive at least 10 minutes before the session.
- Test all AV equipment (projector, laptop, adapters, and any audio)
 - If you arrive the day before your session, test the equipment in the before or after sessions start/conclude for the day.
- Assess room set-up for session type: Roundtable, Seminar, Creative

3. Introductions

- Begin on time
- Greet attendees briefly and thank them for coming.
- Introduce yourself (the moderator) and the session title.
- Provide a short overview of the session's structure and theme.
- Introduce each presenter with a concise bio (around one minute each) and title of presentation.

4. Time Management

- Use a cue system (hand signals or written signs) to alert presenters when they have 2 minutes left, 1 minute left, and when time is over.
- Politely but firmly enforce these time limits to keep the session on track.

5. Facilitating Q&A

- Invite audience questions after all presentations are finished.

NeMLA Conference Session Planning Template

- Ensure that no single voice dominates the discussion.
- Have a backup question ready in case no one speaks up initially.