

NERA ANNUAL CONFERENCE: Roles and Responsibilities

Thank you for participating in the NERA 2021 Conference! Please click on one of the links below to jump to a section of this document:

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We are looking forward to “seeing” you at the conference. If you have questions about the guidelines we’ve provided, please email us at nera.cochairs@gmail.com.

Chair/Facilitator Responsibilities

Each session's Chair/Facilitator is directly responsible for organizing and setting the tone of the session. Put simply, the Chair's/Facilitator's primary goal is a well-organized, smoothly run session that is of the greatest benefit for each presenter and attendee. Your responsibilities as a session chair are as follows:

Prior to the Session

- If your session has a discussant, contact all presenters and the discussant via email once the program is released to introduce yourself, communicate the role of the chair/facilitator, and remind the presenters to submit their paper to the discussant by **October 1, 2021**.
- Ensure that the discussant has access to all papers and will have time to review the papers prior to the session.
- Review the papers to prepare your thoughts on how to organize the session and familiarize yourself with the names of the presenters.

TIP: Search for the authors on LinkedIn or on their institution's/organization's websites to become familiar with them and their work.

- Let the presenters and discussant know how much time they will have to present during the session.

TIP: Be aware, most sessions are 50 minutes. Sessions have either 2 or 3 papers plus a discussant. If possible, allow about 10 minutes of time for audience questions. Also make sure that there is time for transitions between presentations.

- Respond to questions about the session format.

TIP: It's good to request a confirmation from each presenter to make sure they're aware of the session date and time, the amount of time they'll have to speak, and their place in the session order, etc.

- When you log in to the conference, make sure you have the link to the conference "room" where the session will be hosted.
- Each discussant will receive a PPT slide from the NERA Conference Team labeled "NERA 2021 Conference Housekeeping Rules", displaying some tips for ensuring a smooth, well-run virtual session. For example, this slide will remind participants to remain muted throughout the presentations, to enter their questions in the chat, unmute themselves when their question is being asked so that they can elaborate if necessary, etc.
 - This slide should be displayed at the beginning of the session as participants are joining.

At the Session

- Start the session at the scheduled time.
- Briefly review the Housekeeping Rules slide.
- Orient the audience to the context of the session with a few brief introductory remarks.

TIP: Briefly mention common themes across the papers, or perhaps logical connections among the presenters, or how they're taking different approaches to the same issue.

- Introduce the participants before their presentations.

- Hand over the presentation control to the first presenter.
- After each presentation, ensure that control is handed over to the next presenter.
- Adhere to previously agreed upon time limits for each speaker and the discussant. While Chairs/Facilitators need to be attentive to time allocations, the role of chair/facilitator is much more than keeping time. A session's success may depend on the Chair's/Facilitator's ability to limit the time of presentations and temper discussion from the floor to allow sufficient time for interaction.
- Alert the presenters when there are five minutes left to their presentation by unmuting yourself and providing an audio cue to indicate that they have five minutes remaining (e.g. an alarm bell, phone ring tone, etc.).
- Alert the presenters when there is one minute left to their presentation by unmuting yourself and providing an audio cue to indicate that they have one minute remaining (e.g. an alarm bell, phone ring tone, etc.).
- Prepare questions to assist in facilitating audience engagement and discussions.
- End the session on time. Be considerate of other sessions that may follow.
- Complete the end of session survey, if applicable.

Discussant Responsibilities

The Discussant for a session is responsible for providing insightful commentary on the papers in their topic area(s). Comments are expected to be professional and constructive. The goal is to raise issues for broader consideration. Where possible the discussant should also attempt to connect the works presented in the session. Your responsibilities are as follows:

Prior to the Session

- Collect and read all the papers for your session. Prepare appropriate analytical or critical commentaries on the significance and contribution of the papers presented in the session. Some discussants prepare PowerPoint presentations. While this is not necessary, it can be very helpful to you in organizing your comments to the presenters.
- Consult with the session chair on the organization of the session.

At the Session

- Serve as commentator about the papers and issues on substantive points pertaining to these works. It is expected that you draw upon your expertise and views in commenting on papers or presentations; however, it is not the appropriate occasion to present your work.
- Provide comments on papers that will assist authors in taking steps toward publication. Such commentary may include remarks in the session, comments written directly on the papers, and/or later discussions or e-mails with the authors.
- If you have knowledge of appropriate journals where papers could be published, please do not hesitate to encourage authors to submit papers to those venues.

What a discussant SHOULD do...	What a discussant should NOT do...	Tips
Identify commonalities or distinctions among the papers, place the research in a larger context (e.g., public policy, educational trends, new developments in the field), or contribute perspectives from research/experience that add to the existing presentations.	Provide summaries of what each person presented; focus the discussion on the discussant's own work or research.	Assume that the presenters are going to continue the line of research. In which direction do you believe the research should go?
Provide feedback that refers to potential alternative approaches, or different perspectives that might enhance the papers. Identify areas that might require refinement before the papers could be published.	Outwardly criticize a paper as incorrect or flawed. Concerns about the quality or rigor of a paper are best handled prior to or after the session, not in the public forum.	If further clarification from the presenter is needed to allow for better feedback, briefly ask them during the Q&A portion of the session.
Provide succinct comments that add to the presentations and/or facilitate discussion in the time allotted for questions.	Use all the time remaining in a session, allowing no time for conversation between the audience and the presenters.	When unfamiliar with the topic area, it may prove beneficial to facilitate discussion between the audience and the presenter.

Responsibilities of a Presenter in an Individual or Theme-Based Paper Session

As the presenter, you must provide your session chair and discussant with a copy of your **full paper** no later than **October 1, 2021** to provide ample time for preparation of summary remarks for the session. Please note that if you do not submit your full paper to your discussant by this deadline, your discussant is under no obligation to provide commentary on your paper, and this situation often leads to the discussant being at a disadvantage when preparing remarks to deliver during the session. Please communicate with your discussant as far as possible in advance of this deadline if you are unsure you will be able to meet it so that the discussant can decide how this is best handled. Please keep in mind that this date is less than two weeks prior to the start of the conference.

Individual Paper Session

Individual paper presenters should be prepared to summarize their papers in 10-12 minutes (your chair will provide an exact time), highlighting all major points. Major points should fall into those categories used to write your proposal, and should include:

- The purpose of the study, including research questions that you attempted to answer;
- The theoretical framework or literature review that supports the rationale for the study;
- Methodology used to carry out the study;
- Results and conclusions;
- Critical assessment of your conclusions and the educational implications of your findings for further research, practice, or policy.

Given the diverse nature of the educational research presented at NERA, it seems to work well (especially in the case of individual paper sessions) to try to balance and address each of these points for your audience, with more time devoted to the aspects you especially want to highlight. Do not simply read your paper or PowerPoint slides, and please be sure that you have practiced your presentation under timed conditions so that it can be presented well in the amount of time you have been allotted.

Although other modes of audio-visual display have been used at NERA over the years, most presenters tend to use PowerPoint (or similar) slides, so we encourage all presenters to try to prepare PowerPoint slides to maximize time and organize the flow of the presentation.

During the presentation, the session chair/facilitator will kick off the meeting by reviewing the housekeeping rules for the session and introducing each presenter. The chair/facilitator will hand over the presentation control when it is your turn to present. Make sure you have your presentation up on your laptop/desktop and are only sharing your PowerPoint slides during the presentation.

Be mindful of the allotted time you have to present your work. The session chair/facilitator will unmute him/herself with five minutes left to the presentation to remind you of the time remaining, and again with one minute left to the presentation.

The session chair/facilitator will be monitoring the chat for questions at the end. Be prepared to answer any questions related to your presentation.

Theme-Based Paper Session/Symposium

Presenters should follow the respective guidelines for paper sessions as outlined above. Due to the collaborative nature of this type of session, individual presentations may encapsulate only a few of the categories bulleted previously, with all categories eventually being covered. For theme-based sessions/symposia, the organizer should take responsibility to ensure that the session's discussant receives the full papers from the presenters no later than **October 1, 2021** to provide ample time for preparation of remarks for the session.

Note: After the conference, you will receive information about (voluntarily) submitting your paper for inclusion in the *NERA 2021 Conference Proceedings – Digital Commons*.

Responsibilities of a Presenter in a Poster Session

As the presenter in a poster session, you must submit your poster presentation no later than **September 24, 2021**.

The display in the poster should be easily read and clear. Include a page with lettering for the title, author, and affiliation at least 36-pt font. The rest of your lettering should be **at least 28 point font**. Be sure to include diagrams, figures, photos, bulleted text, or other visuals that describe your research and that may include information on any of the following:

- **BRIEF** rationale you used for doing your research
- **BRIEF** statement of your research problem and your research questions
- **BRIEF** description of methods and procedures used
- **BRIEF** description of anticipated or actual results in relation to your research questions
- **BRIEF** description of implications of your study for further research

Create an image file of your poster.

Poster presenters often find it easiest to create their posters in PowerPoint as a single slide, as this easily allows you to add/rearrange text boxes, images, graphs, etc. However, **the final format of your poster must be an image file - .png, .jpg, or .jpeg**. Thus, once you have finished creating your poster in PowerPoint (or whatever program you choose), save the final product as an image file. One easy way to do this is to “Print to PDF”, open the PDF, and “Save As” a .png or .jpg/.jpeg. If possible, try to keep your image file dimensions around 2400 x 1850 pixels.

During the poster session, you will be displaying your poster in a virtual room. The link/location of the virtual room will be provided to you prior to the conference. Make sure you arrive 5-10 minutes early and stand next to your assigned poster area.

Participants will be joining the poster sessions during the allotted poster session time and asking questions as they visit different posters. Be prepared to answer questions related to your presentation.

TIP: POSTER PRESENTATIONS THAT CONSIST MOSTLY OF TEXT ARE THE LEAST EFFECTIVE! Please make your poster presentation as visually appealing as possible. Be brief and succinct with text!

Note: It is not necessary to develop a paper for a poster session. However, after the conference, you will receive information about (voluntarily) submitting your research for inclusion in the *NERA 2021 Conference Proceedings* – Digital Commons. If you would like your research to be included, you will have to submit a paper after the conference.

Responsibilities of a Participant in a Roundtable Session

Presenters should be prepared to present their research (completed or in-progress) in a similar fashion as described in the individual paper session (details outlined above), except that there will be feedback and discussion after each presentation.

During the roundtable session, you will be presenting your research in a virtual room. The link/location of the virtual room will be provided to you prior to the conference. Make sure you arrive 5-10 minutes early and display any supporting materials you prepared to present your work and facilitate discussion.

As roundtable sessions are designed to provide a discussion-based forum for work in-progress, discussants have not been assigned. Please come prepared to present a brief summary of your work (for example, you may want to prepare a couple of PowerPoint slides) . After each participant shares their work, the session format should facilitate discussion from authors about lingering methodological or design questions, as well as provide a forum for discussing data collection, analysis, or interpretation.

Your group is responsible for facilitating interactions among presenters and observers when appropriate.

Note: It is not necessary to develop a paper for a roundtable session. However, after the conference, you will receive information about (voluntarily) submitting your research for inclusion in the *NERA 2021 Conference Proceedings – Digital Commons*. If you would like your research to be included, you will have to submit a paper after the conference.