

PLAINS ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY (PAS) CONFERENCE

A Guidebook for Hosts and Organizers

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It takes a lot of doing to organize a conference like this, and that in itself reflects the passage of professional time. In 1949 or 1950, I think it was, there was a snafu and no one sent out an announcement of the Plains Conference, nor was a Call For Papers issued. Nothing whatsoever was done. Everyone came to Lincoln just the same, forty or so people, and we had a good conference. Don't you wish it was as simple as that now?

E. Mott Davis, letter to F.A. Calabrese, September 4, 1992
(reprinted from 50th Plains Conference Program, Lincoln)

Revised October 2018

Version 2018.0

(As future edits are made to this document please
update this version number here and save under a
new file name with that version number)

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INTRODUCTION: THE PLAINS ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

This guide was assembled in response to a need for organizers to have a document assisting them in sponsoring a productive and well-organized Plains Conference. The guide is not intended to be the final word on how to carry out a conference. Rather, it provides the observations and suggestions of several people who have organized past Plains Conferences. The guide should be viewed as a “work in progress.” It should be continuously modified as the Plains Anthropological Society (PAS) Board sees fit, based upon feedback from future hosts and conference attendees.

History of the Conference

The first Plains Conference was held in Vermillion, South Dakota, in August, 1931. The meeting took place only three additional times over the next 16 years (in 1932, 1936, and 1940). It became an annual conference in 1947. From 1947 through 1959 the meeting was held in Lincoln, Nebraska, the Missouri Basin Project headquarters of the Smithsonian Institution River Basin Surveys. Since the early 1960s, the Plains Conference has been held in all U.S. states and Canadian provinces on the Great Plains. It has grown from a small, informal gathering of scholars to a regional three-day conference with attendance averaging about 350 in recent years. The Plains Conference and the journal *Plains Anthropologist* have always been linked under the same organization, formally named the Plains Anthropological Society in 1982. The conference and journal are operated under the auspices of the PAS Board of Directors.

Purpose and General Organization of the Conference

The Plains Conference is designed as a forum for scholars, researchers, working professionals, students, and other interested parties to share anthropological, historical, and other related information about the Great Plains. This information is shared through formal presentations and informal workshops, tours, and social events. The Board conducts most of its annual business at the conference. Society bylaws require that the meeting be held in October or November and a rather standardized format has been developed. The meeting normally begins on Wednesday evening with the Early Bird Party. Presentations and meetings take place all day on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday morning. Tours are usually scheduled during the day on Wednesday and/or on Saturday afternoon. Because the Great Plains comprise a large area and airline transportation may be indirect, conference participants may drive as long as a day and a half to reach the conference site. Thus, every effort should be made to allow Saturday afternoon and Sunday for travel. A meeting extending into Sunday is not unheard of, but presents a departure from the norm and should be done in only the most unusual circumstances.

A general outline of principal conference events serves as a model for scheduling:

WEDNESDAY

- Pre-conference field trip; pre-conference workshops (to be completed by 5:30 p.m.)
- First PAS Board Meeting (begins about 6 p.m. for board members, includes dinner)
- Early Bird Party (evening)

THURSDAY

- Morning paper/poster sessions (book/exhibit room)
- Lunch break (possible roundtable lunches)
- Afternoon paper/poster sessions (book/exhibit room)
- Reception (evening)

FRIDAY

- Morning paper/poster sessions (book/exhibit room)
- Lunch break (possible roundtable lunches)
- Afternoon paper/poster sessions (book/exhibit room)
- PAS General Business Meeting (after sessions)
- Open cash bar (after business meeting and before banquet)
- Second PAS Board Meeting (after business meeting & concurrent with cash bar)
- Banquet (evening)
- Conference & PAS reports, awards, and resolutions by PAS President (after banquet)
- Banquet speaker (after resolutions)

SATURDAY

- Morning paper/poster sessions (book/exhibit room)
- Post-conference field trip (afternoon)

PLANNING AND SCHEDULING

The success of a gathering the size of the Plains Conference begins with good planning several years prior to the event. Planning ahead gives conference coordinators time to secure meeting space, make arrangements with local hotels, secure financing or donated services, create committees, delegate responsibilities, and to identify any particular features of the conference (i.e., a plenary session, themes, or special symposia). Currently, the conference is planned and hosted entirely by the conference organizers (the Plains Anthropological Society does not have a separate Conference Committee). Early communication between conference organizers and the Plains Anthropological Society Board of Directors is strongly encouraged.

Important Contacts

It is important to keep in close contact with the PAS Board of Directors as planning for the conference progresses. This is normally achieved by contacting the President of the PAS. Financial matters should be coordinated with the PAS Treasurer. Coordinate with the Webmaster to post announcements on the PAS website and the organization's social media pages. To place conference notices in *Plains Anthropologist*, contact the Editor. The following permanent email addresses have been established for these offices by the PAS:

- President: President@plainsanthropologicalsociety.org
- Treasurer: Treasurer@plainsanthropologicalsociety.org
- Webmaster: (currently same as Treasurer)
- Editor: Editor@plainsanthropologicalsociety.org

Additionally, a permanent email for the Conference hosts has been established. Access to this email will be granted once the prior year's conference has been closed out. This email is conference@plainsanthropologicalsociety.org.

2-4 Years Prior to Conference

According to the bylaws of the PAS, the location of the annual conference should be scheduled at least two years in advance. A proposal or invitation to host the conference should be made by the conference organizers at the general business meeting of the annual Plains Conference 2-3 years prior to the conference. The initial proposal presentation should set a tentative date for the conference. An acceptance of this invitation is made by the membership present at the meeting. If the membership receives multiple proposals for a given year, it can vote to schedule them for subsequent years.

Since the annual conference is often held at a hotel, the selection of the facility should be made based on the number of available guest and meeting rooms, costs, general appearance of the facility, and location. Arrangements should be made with area hotels to block rooms and set rates. Typically, one hotel is selected as the "official" meeting hotel because it contains the rooms in which the conference sessions and associated activities will take place. Frequently, one may negotiate rates with a hotel for a special "conference rate" based on projections of high attendance and room rentals. Rates include not only the cost of rooms for attendees, but especially for more expensive meeting rooms. Organizers should request bids from various hotels, as competition may lower prices. A major concern when selecting a conference date in a "university town" is to make certain that no major sporting events will simultaneously occur. This can impact hotel availability, raise prices, and reduce parking and seating in restaurants. Be sure to select dates when there are no major town events (such as a fair or festival) planned. Confirm dates of the conference with the hotel(s) and the PAS Board of Directors.

The Year Prior to the Conference

Organizers should delegate authority to various individuals well in advance of the conference (e.g., managing audiovisual equipment, the book room, field trips, guest speaker, etc.) and set a schedule for completion of important tasks. It will be useful to schedule meetings during the planning stages and more often as the conference approaches. Work closely with the hotel. Once room costs have been established, work with the hotel on reserving back-up equipment, scheduling rooms and snack breaks, banquet planning, and ensuring the availability of beer and other entertainment. Prepare a preliminary budget based on the actual costs of the meeting (see "COSTS AND FINANCES" below).

Staffing. Staff includes a conference chair, co-chair(s), and other individuals, usually a local team. Often, multiple institutions in or near the host city organize the conference. They include universities, state historical societies, federal agencies, avocational or professional societies, cultural resource management firms, and others. One representative from each institution may serve as a conference co-chair. Co-chairs are responsible for assigning various tasks to staff and volunteers. It is not unreasonable to expect anywhere from five to ten persons working on conference arrangements intermittently for a couple of years. Co-chairs work with hotel staff, meet with volunteers to organize audiovisual equipment, field trips, the book room, the banquet and its speaker, and various other conference events (see "CONFERENCE

INFRASTRUCTURE” and “ORGANIZING CONFERENCE EVENTS” below), and checking the agenda for completion of various tasks.

Staff may also include local volunteers, who might be town residents, members of a local archaeological society, or students. At least 10–20 volunteers may be required during the conference to assist with various tasks. These tasks may involve, for instance, one room monitor per session, two roaming troubleshooters, and several registration table staff. Advance training sessions should be provided to prepare volunteers for their assigned tasks. If one of the host institutions is a university, students traditionally provide organizational labor, particularly during the conference and several months leading up to it.

Meeting Announcements. Announcements of the meeting location, dates, times, and deadlines should be placed in the winter, spring, and summer issues of the *Plains Anthropologist* and on the PAS website, Facebook page, and other social media pages, as appropriate. Examples of past announcements may be found in previous issues of *Plains Anthropologist*. Organizers will need to work with the PAS Webmaster and *Plains Anthropologist* Editor. Conference announcements may also be placed in national and regional newsletters and on their associated websites. Relevant organizations include the Society for Historical Archaeology, Society for American Archaeology, Midwest Archaeological Conference, and Southeastern Archaeological Conference.

Conference Logo. Early in the organizational process an official conference logo should be developed. The logo should be placed on all conference website materials, Facebook and other social media pages, in notices published in *Plains Anthropologist*, and elsewhere. It should be displayed liberally in meeting areas and in the conference program. In the past, depictions of Native American rock art have frequently been employed (be sure to acquire use permission from relevant tribes), but drawings of artifacts or depictions of prehistoric village scenes have also been used to create conference logos. Please proceed carefully when picking a logo so as not to appear to appropriate cultural symbols or other imagery that may be inappropriate for use as conference logo.

Conference Planning Checklist. The following presents key tasks associated with conference development.

- Develop or update forms for registration, abstract submission, symposium proposals, etc. (work with PAS Webmaster and include consideration of past or extant forms)
- Set deadlines for submission of abstracts, symposium proposals, requests for vendor tables, roundtable lunches, workshops, etc.
- Advertise conference on PAS website, Facebook, in *Plains Anthropologist*, and on other professional or society websites
- Contact other potential advertisers
- Solicit students and other volunteers
- Find scholars willing to chair general sessions
- Contact potential sponsors
- Contact potential book sellers, vendors, and institutions for book/exhibit room
- Develop field trips or tours
- Locate venue for reception and work out details (menu, drinks, tours)

- Establish venue and menu for board meeting(s)
- Finalize conference schedule
- Generate and print conference programs
- Work out details (menu and drinks) for Early Bird Party
- Decide on banquet menu
- Select a banquet speaker
- Design conference merchandise and decide on free items for attendees (registration bags, mugs, key chains, pens, t-shirts, hats)
- Work with manufacturers for timely delivery of merchandise
- Assemble registration packets
- Print conference signage (session notices, recognition of sponsors/partners)

Budgetary concerns: while volunteers are not paid, they may be compensated with a complimentary meeting registration in return for a specified number of hours of service. In some instances, conference organizers from universities have employed the services of campus conference offices. Such an option is not without expense (usually a significant percentage of the total cost of the conference). It is generally preferable to *not* use a university conference services team unless it is absolutely necessary. The PAS has invested in much of the infrastructure a conference services team provides to help the organizers reduce the number of things they already are tasked with and to help keep costs as low as possible. Ultimately, however, it is up to the meeting organizers to decide how they want to do it.

THE CONFERENCE VENUE

Although not required, centralization of all activities within a single facility is desirable. Early selection, as much as two years in advance, of a large and well-staffed hotel and conference center is suggested. Although hotel managers may not tell you this, they generally have a fair amount of negotiating flexibility with respect to costs and services provided. Meeting rooms, registration space, a book/exhibit room, and several hotel rooms may be provided free of charge if the negotiated number of rooms are booked and bar revenues from the Early Bird Party, banquet, or other events meet certain amounts. If your community has more than one such facility, shop around and seek the optimum situation. It may be advisable during the negotiation stage for potential hotel hosts to contact hotels that hosted recent PAS conferences to ask how many rooms were booked and the level of bar and food revenues. Although cost is important, services, meeting room space, and proximity to bars, restaurants, shops, etc., are equally important. Do not settle for an understaffed hotel with poor service, cramped meeting rooms and social spaces just to save money. When discussing the conference with prospective facilities, tell them exactly what you need and what they should expect. *Get a written estimate with all cost schedules and dates that payments are due.*

Food and beverage arrangements should be discussed in detail prior to signing a contract with the hotel, because these items are very expensive and a major source of hotel revenue. Menus for conference snacks and the banquet can be negotiated and prices may vary greatly. If the facility does not provide planning forms for each meeting room and session (i.e., how you wish each

room to be set up), develop these in advance to ensure clear communication with the facility staff about specific room needs.

The PAS is ultimately the responsible entity for the commitment to the hotel and meeting space and therefore it is preferred that the PAS assume liability for these agreements or contracts. The President and the Board will not be involved with planning or negotiations with the hotel. However, after the meeting organizers have completed negotiations and are ready to sign a hotel and meeting facilities agreement(s) or contract(s), these must be forwarded to the PAS President and Treasurer for review. Once approved, the PAS President will sign and return the documents to the meeting organizers. This places liabilities with the PAS and not the meeting organizers. Signatures of the host organizers on these documents are encouraged but are optional.

Considerations when Negotiating with the Hotel/Venue

1. *Location in a central place and of sufficient size to host conference.* The facility should have certain amenities, including places to sit and chat, rooms for 3-6 concurrent sessions capable of holding 50-150 people, plus rooms for vendors and poster sessions. Ideally, a bar or pub and a restaurant will also be available.
2. *Cost of rooms for guests.* Can a lower “conference rate” be negotiated? Can the hotel book a block of rooms until a specified date (specified in the conference announcement)? After that date, unreserved rooms are opened on a first-come, first-serve basis and negotiated conference rates may no longer apply. Try to establish a maximum rate for having as many people in a room as possible. The hotel may not like this, but it is a real advantage for students on a tight budget and will provide incentive to attend. Remind the hotel that better room rates ultimately equate to more attendees, more rooms occupied, and increased hotel revenue, including the restaurant and bar, if they exist.
3. *A large room for the Early Bird Party (and Reception, if on-site).* This room should stay open late with noise (possibly a band) and alcohol or bar services. Inquire about beer and liquor costs. (Can outside kegs be brought in? Can beer kegs instead of bottles be purchased to reduce costs?) A reception may include dancing.
4. *A diverse menu of food at the banquet.* It should include vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options, and the cost per plate.
5. *Cost of all meeting rooms and other “event” rooms as a package (Early Bird Party, banquet, reception, book/exhibit room, poster and meeting rooms).* These costs may be negotiated against a projected number of rooms rented.
6. *Costs of audio-visual equipment.* Equipment for presentation sessions and symposia may include computers, projectors, remotes, laser pointers, and other special requests. Contact the facility’s management to determine if podia, podia lights, extension cords, and projection screens are available or if the organizers must furnish these items. These costs may be negotiated against a projected number of rooms rented. Note that such equipment may sometimes be borrowed from a local university or rented from a third party if permitted by the hotel/venue.
7. *Adequate coffee, tea, beverages, snacks, for morning and afternoon breaks.* This is often a huge money-maker for hotels so menu content must be negotiated relative to costs. To reduce costs, inquire whether outside food might be brought in.
8. *Costs for alcohol.* A significant source of income for hotels is alcoholic beverages, and several PAS conference events offer them (e.g., Early Bird Party, Cash Bar after Business

Meeting, Banquet, and possibly the Reception if held at the conference site). Negotiate prices for kegs versus bottles of beer or for large-volume containers of wine. In certain instances, it may be possible to bring in beer from outside sources. It may also be possible to utilize the remaining beer kegs from the Early Bird Party (if any) at later events.

9. *Extended closing hours for the hotel lounge, if allowed by law.*
10. *Delegate one or more hotel staff members to work closely with you.* They will likely include a conference or sales manager, catering manager, and a facility maintenance supervisor. The maintenance person typically knows significantly more about the physical facility and its procedures and staff than does the conference liaison. It is also advisable to become acquainted with the individual in charge of room reservations to avoid inevitable problems in this domain.

Parking

Frequently, a conference hotel will offer parking to its guests, but those not staying at the hotel will have to locate alternatives. Meeting organizers should indicate in the conference packet other public parking locations.

Overflow Hotel(s)

It may be desirable to arrange in advance for “overflow” rooms at another hotel if the host hotel fills to capacity. The host hotel may be willing to assist with this.

CONFERENCE INFRASTRUCTURE

This section describes the physical needs of the conference in terms of spaces, tables, signage, message boards, and the like.

Registration Desk

A registration desk should be open and staffed through the length of the meeting, from Wednesday evening immediately prior to the Early Bird Party (usually 5-8 p.m.) through Saturday morning (8-5 p.m. on Thursday and Friday; 8-9 a.m. on Saturday). The purpose of the table is to permit (1) pre-registrants to pick up their meeting packets, (2) for walk-in registrants to register for the meeting by paying their fees and acquiring a meeting packet, and (3) to serve as an informational source for inquiries about the conference. Registration desk set-up is typically in a conference hallway near the meeting sites, and should be continually staffed. Most of the business at this desk will occur Wednesday evening and Thursday morning requiring more staff; subsequently it may be staffed more lightly and perhaps combined with the PAS Table (see below). It is advisable to create and distribute a schedule and contact list of registration desk staff to your volunteers prior to the conference. Organizers should plan to staff this table with 1 (late in conference) to 4 (early in conference) people at all times.

Budgetary concerns: 2-3 tables with chairs should be included in your venue contract for Wednesday evening and Thursday. Only a single table will be necessary later in the conference. A computer is necessary to register walk-in registrants. A printer will be useful to generate

printed name tags (although written name tags may be adequate) and receipts for walk-in registrants.

In addition to serving as a source of information, the registration desk serves three purposes.

Distribute meeting packets. Packets for pre-registrants should be organized by name in large envelopes or bags that contain (1) required meeting materials (name badge, program), (2) optional purchases (banquet ticket, round-table luncheon and tour tickets, merchandise), (3) conference complimentary memorabilia (see below), plus (4) city brochures, maps, coupons, and restaurant guides. The last several items are usually available through the host city's Chamber of Commerce or Convention and Visitors Bureau. Note that these entities typically offer useful information for registration packets.

For on-site registrants, generic packets may be prepared prior to the conference, and staff can then place specialized materials into each bag (e.g., purchased tour tickets, t-shirts, etc.). Name tags and receipts may be printed on demand or written by hand for on-site registrants.

Distribute complimentary conference memorabilia. These items typically include mugs, glasses, key chains, pens, or cloth bags, all included in the meeting packet. Each is typically embossed with the conference logo. They can be obtained cheaply, but must be ordered in advance. A simple internet search will reveal many companies that offer such items in bulk and with rapid turnaround. The budget for complimentary materials should be kept low, to several dollars (these funds ultimately derive from each registrant's own fees).

Distribute purchased merchandise. Items available for purchase during pre-registration typically include such physical items as (1) baseball hats and (2) t-shirts (each with the conference logo), and "service" items including (3) tour tickets (if there is a cost, see below), (4) round-table lunch tickets (if they occur), and (5) banquet tickets. A limited amount of the physical merchandise should be made available for sale at the conference to late registrants and others. Normally, it is not possible to sell tickets for round-table lunches and the banquet to on-site registrants because the hotel needs a precise head-count days in advance of these events (check with the hotel about timing). The Wednesday tour will have already passed by the time the registration desk opens, but it may be possible to sell tickets for a Saturday tour if one exists with available bus space.

Undertaking monetary transactions. Monetary transactions will be necessary for on-site registrants and for purchasers of merchandise. They may require transfer of funds via PayPal or credit card. Wi-fi, 4G or 5G access may therefore be essential. Cash payments will require a secure place for storage of monies received, such as a lock-box and a secure room. In all cases, accurate records must be kept, possibly using a computer database. The PAS will provide a tablet and a credit card reader that is linked to the PAS PayPal account so credit cards can be processed for on-site registration and other purchases. If electronic records are kept the organizers should keep a paper record as backup, including a paper record of all credit card transactions. Checks can be made payable to the Plains Anthropological Conference. The conference organizer should work with the PAS Treasurer to implement secure means for receipt of payments. Some attendees do still request paper receipts, so having a receipt book on hand or a computer and printer will be useful.

PAS Table

The PAS normally staffs a table that permits attendees to join the PAS, renew their memberships, and perhaps purchase back issues of *Plains Anthropologist*. Frequently, this table is placed adjacent to the registration desk, but it may also be located in the book/exhibit room. This table should be available and staffed for the duration of the conference, from Wednesday evening through Saturday morning. The PAS Board is responsible for staffing this table. A computer and internet link may be required for on-line connection to PAS databases, but they will likely be arranged by PAS (contact the President or Treasurer for specific needs). Conference organizers only need to ensure that the table and chairs are reserved for them through the hotel.

Budgetary concerns: a table and several chairs (2-4) placed close to a power outlet.

Meeting Rooms

Several rooms are necessary for paper and poster sessions. Poster sessions may be located in a separate room, with size dependent on the number of posters per session and the number of concurrent sessions. Occasionally, poster displays have been held in the book/exhibit room, requiring a large room with sufficient space for all activities. In some conferences the same room has offered coffee and snacks, permitting attendees to snack while viewing posters or books and exhibits. With the current size of the conference and its diversity, concurrent paper sessions are unavoidable, yet they may force attendees to choose between simultaneous papers of interest. Recent conferences typically offer 3-5 concurrent paper sessions in addition to a single room for poster sessions. Typically, one large room is employed for sessions anticipated by the organizers to be well attended, with a series of smaller rooms employed for other sessions.

Budgetary concerns: meeting spaces are negotiated early in the process of establishing a conference site. Poster session rooms may require poster display boards, tables, and display accessories (tacks, tape, Velcro). Check with the hotel about whether attendees will be allowed to mount posters directly to the wall, and (if so) which adhesives or mounting materials are permissible. It is possible as technology changes that meeting organizers will want or be asked to allow for digital poster sessions, which will require access to power outlets. Paper session rooms require computers, projectors, projection screens, remote pointers, microphones, podia, possibly a timer, and seats for attendees. A table with ice water and glasses placed at the rear of the room is also desirable. Each paper session room should be staffed by one individual who will assist the session chair or symposium organizer(s) and is responsible for running and maintaining the presentation computer, projector, room lights, and other equipment.

Message Board

A board for posting messages has been useful at past conferences. It may be located near the registration desk.

Budgetary concerns: a free-standing board may be required, similar to those used for the poster sessions.

Book/Exhibit Room

Conference organizers need to contact publishers (local, regional university, state historical society presses, and major publishers) and anyone else who may wish to exhibit at the Plains Conference (e.g., archaeological societies, used book dealers, equipment sales, specialized laboratories) in advance of the conference. A letter should be sent to all potential exhibitors early to encourage them to participate and to provide information on costs, conference dates, times, and location. An announcement offering display tables, with organizer contact information, should be included in the conference “Call for Papers” and on the PAS website.

Organization. Displays and exhibitions traditionally have been open all day Thursday and Friday, as well as Saturday morning. A secure room that can be locked off-hours is required. In some cases, publishers send fliers and display copies of books, but do not actually attend the conference. They may pay required exhibit fees or perhaps offer their books in lieu of fees (conference organizers may accept or decline these offers). In these instances, plan in advance how these materials will be displayed and what will become of the display copies (e.g., gifted to volunteers, students, etc.).

Planning. Find out in advance how much space each exhibitor will need. Larger requirements, meaning more than one table, may incur a larger fee. Some organizations will plan to jointly share a space. Some exhibitors may require a power outlet. Place large-print placards for each exhibitor at their space or table (perhaps tape them to the tables as signage) prior to set-up on Wednesday evening or Thursday morning. Conference staff should be available to answer questions and check in on the book/exhibit room during the conference.

Monetary transactions. Note that transactions within the book/exhibit room may require transferal of funds via PayPal or credit card. Wi-fi, 4G or 5G access may be essential to vendors.

Budgetary concerns: a room of sufficient size is required. Costs to exhibitors in recent years has varied between \$50 - \$100 per table for the conference. Ideally, these costs should be structured to cover the cost of the room. In some conferences, a large book/exhibit room has been coupled with the poster session display room to reduce overall costs.

Presentation Preview Room

Often, a small room is made available with a computer that permits attendees to view or review their presentations, and perhaps to make last minute alterations. As such a room and audiovisual equipment can add to conference costs, an alternative is to have attendees use the hotel Business Center, if one exists.

Coffee and Snack Breaks

Coffee, tea, and snack breaks should be offered mid-morning and mid-afternoon each day of the conference, for a total of five such breaks. Be aware that attendees expect reasonable offerings of snacks (muffins, donuts, cookies, chips, etc.), with frequent complaints when this is not the case.

Organization. The time of each break should be specified in the conference program, and 15-20 minutes should minimally be allowed. The site of the snack table is often in a centrally located hallway, or perhaps in the poster or book/exhibit room.

Budgetary concerns: hotels typically charge high fees for this service, so negotiating a reasonable price against what is offered is essential. It is unlikely that conference organizers will be permitted to bring in outside snacks, although this has occurred in some conferences.

Signage

Extensive signage needs to be printed and posted at the meeting venue. Each sign should include the conference logo and the PAS logo (available from the PAS website). Important signs include “Meeting Registration,” “Plains Anthropological Society Membership,” “Poster Room,” “Book & Exhibit Room,” and “Message Board.” Within the book and exhibits room, each vendor or exhibitor should have a sign affixed to or placed on their table. Moreover, at each meeting paper or poster room the complete schedule for each morning or afternoon should be printed in large format (preferably poster size) and placed on the meeting door or on a tripod adjacent to the door. Finally, signage might be posted containing the names or logos of conference donors and sponsors. This kind of signage might be placed near the Registration Desk. Moreover, as a means of fund raising (see below), individuals, companies, or institutions might sponsor particular events, such as the food for a coffee break or beer at the Early Bird Party. These contributions should be acknowledged with appropriate signage indicating “This coffee break sponsored by XXX,” with their logo.

Budgetary concerns: Costs for printing of signage and posters

ORGANIZING CONFERENCE EVENTS

The following topics are organized in more or less a chronological order according to the meeting schedule.

Conference Field Trips

Conference field trips should go to nearby venues relating to Plains anthropology, archaeology, history, scenic sites, or points of interest (e.g., geological sites). The conference organizers should locate individuals who are knowledgeable about the places to be visited and who are willing to lead and be responsible for planning such excursions. Multiple individuals may be appropriate if multiple sites will be visited. Organizers may need assistants on hand to answer questions, handle emergencies, find lost children, and make head counts for buses.

Organization. Field trip organizers are responsible for arranging transportation (usually a bus) and lunches for all-day trips. Boxed lunches may be pre-purchased from a vendor (the conference hotel may offer this service) scheduled to arrive on-site or at the bus prior to its departure. The tour registration process should permit attendees a selection of food options, typically sandwiches, including vegetarian and vegan options. Alternatively, a restaurant stop may be made if time permits. Field trip organizers must calculate trip costs per person and scheduling needs (departure and arrival times) in order that all relevant information may be provided *in time for conference on-line registration* (see below).

- *Wednesday Field Trip.* This field trip may be “all day,” leaving early, but it should return to the conference hotel by 5:30 p.m. so that PAS board members may attend the 6 p.m. board meeting and other participants may get cleaned up and have dinner before the Early Bird Party. Transportation and lunch should be provided.
- *Saturday Field Trip.* This trip should be planned for the afternoon only. Transportation should be provided as well as lunch if an early departure is required. In some conferences walking tours to view local historical sites or architecture have been organized at low or no cost to participants.
- *Overnight Field Trips.* Occasionally, the Plains Conference has offered overnight field trips when venues are distant or numerous. They typically depart Saturday mid-day and return Sunday evening. The trip organizer must also consider lodging costs, breakfast and dinner arrangements.

Budgetary concerns: ideally, all field trips should be self-supporting (they should not add costs to the conference). Participant fees should include transportation costs, breakfasts, lunches, dinners (where appropriate), entrance fees to parks or museums, and possibly honoraria for guides and presenters. The cost per individual should be determined well in advance and be included on the conference website for registration.

Conference Workshops

Workshops have been offered at past PAS meetings in such topics as GIS, geophysics, cultural resource management, lithics analysis, and other areas. They may last a half-day (on Wednesday or Saturday afternoon) or a full day (Wednesday). They are typically proposed by a Workshop Organizer interested in offering a workshop. Alternatively, the conference organizers may request individuals to host them.

Recently, the PAS Student Affairs Committee has organized a luncheon workshop either on Thursday or Friday with an explicit focus on student issues. The Student Affairs chair (a PAS Board member) or the President of the Student Affairs group should reach out to the meeting organizers well in advance to plan this meeting. The PAS Board decided in 2017 to offer a stipend to cover some costs of this meeting, but ideally the conference space would have a room or venue for this meeting at no additional charge.

Organization. Workshop organizers must work with conference organizers to arrange room, seating, tables, AV equipment, and other needs at the conference venue. A workshop involving computing (e.g., GIS) may require additional tables and computers, possibly networked. Workshop organizers must permit sufficient lead-time so that all relevant information may be provided during conference registration.

Budgetary concerns: costs of conference workshops (room, tables, computers, projectors, etc.) should be carried by participants in their registration fees. The cost per individual should be determined well in advance and be included on the conference website for registration.

Board Meetings

There are two PAS board meetings during the conference. Meeting organizers should coordinate with the PAS president for specific details about these meetings before the conference.

- *Wednesday evening.* This primary board meeting typically begins at 6 p.m. and is attended by board and ex-officio members. It usually lasts up to four hours as the annual business of the PAS is conducted. A room must be provided with table and seating for at least 15 people, along with a catered dinner pre-arranged to accommodate dietary preferences. A computer, projector, and screen may be required. The conference organizer is typically expected to make brief remarks to the Board at this meeting relating to basic attendance, income, expenses, and other statistics (if known). Coordinate with the PAS President to determine a presentation time at the Board meeting.
- *Friday meeting.* The second board meeting occurs immediately after the annual Business Meeting and is held in that room after everyone leaves. It typically lasts less than an hour and is held concurrent with the cash bar that precedes the conference banquet. This second meeting allows the newly composed board to get acquainted, select officers, and appoint committee chairs.

Budgetary concerns: the Wednesday evening meeting requires a room, dinners for all participants. A computer, projector, and screen may also be required.

Early Bird Party

The Early Bird Party is held Wednesday evening, usually from about 7-11 p.m., at the conference venue to welcome attendees to the conference. It offers the chance for friends to meet, new and old, and serves as an ice-breaker.

Organization. A large room is required with tables and chairs that will suffice for perhaps 80% of the projected conference attendance. A wide assortment of beverages should be available. There has been a tradition of “free” beer (factored into registration fees) and it cannot be stressed enough that a great quantity is needed. Attendees will expect free, self-served hors d'oeuvres or even enough food to suffice for a light dinner. Light music may be provided, but it is stressed that the music should not be loud so people may easily converse.

Budgetary concerns: room, food, bar tender/drinks, music/band.

Paper Sessions

Morning & afternoon meeting times. Morning sessions should occur between 8 a.m.-12 p.m. and afternoon sessions between 1 p.m.-5 p.m. However, no one enjoys getting up for an 8 a.m. session, so moving start times to 8:30 or 9 a.m. is welcome, if the number of papers offered allows. Additionally, a lunch break of one hour is short and undesirable, especially if nearby restaurants are crowded. A 1.5 hour lunch break is ideal, meaning that afternoon sessions might start as late as 1:30 p.m. (perhaps not possible, depending on scheduling).

Session chairs. Symposia are organized by individuals of the PAS membership and these individuals will normally chair those oral sessions. However, about half of the oral papers solicited to the conference are placed into general sessions, which must be put together by the

meeting organizers on the basis of paper topics or themes garnered from titles and abstracts. General sessions should be no longer than a half day and should include at least four presentations. Conference organizers must recruit session chairs to manage each general session, a task that includes introducing speakers and keeping the session on schedule. Ideally, session chairs are individuals knowledgeable about the session's topic. All session chairs are named in the conference program.

Meeting rooms. Each meeting room should be well ventilated and equipped with a computer, projector, projection screen, remote pointer, microphone, podium, podium light, extension cords, ample seating, and drinking water. A timer or clock at the podium is useful (although many session chairs may use a timer on their smartphones). A session chair or chairs (in the case of symposia) is in charge of the room and keeps the session on schedule. An assistant (usually a volunteer) manages projection devices and the loading of presentations prior to the session.

Session computers, software and projectors. Microsoft-compatible computers should be sought to handle projections in meeting rooms. PowerPoint software should be reasonably up to date (the latest or next to latest version). The meeting hotel will frequently make available, for a price, session computers and projectors. Alternatively, local companies may rent such equipment at a more reasonable cost. If organizers are affiliated with a university, government agency, or other large institution one may seek to borrow such equipment from various departments for the conference. Such lending may be regarded as "institutional support" for the conference, and that institution may be acknowledged as an official supporter of the conference (with logos and other accolades). It may be hotel policy that their equipment be employed for sessions, however. Whether this is instituted may be negotiated when drawing up the initial hotel agreement. Typically, the session or room assistant manages the computers to ensure display of correct files and a timely transition between presentation/speakers.

Session lengths. Most sessions are a half day (or shorter). They include 1) symposia, 2) general sessions (volunteered papers or posters that are grouped by the conference organizer), or 3) "Special Sessions," proposed or organized by PAS Board members (such as the Student Paper Competition). Occasionally, a large symposium may require more than a half day, in which case it may be divided into morning and afternoon sessions. General sessions should be no longer than a half day and should include at least four presentations. Beware that mid-morning and mid-afternoon coffee and snack breaks (see below) of at least 15 minutes must be considered in the scheduling of any session that is scheduled through these times (some slight staggering of times between various concurrent sessions may be allowed).

Session advertisements. Session schedules should be posted on or near session meeting room doors every morning and afternoon before the start of each session. These schedules should be in large print, allowing them to be easily read outside each room. Last minute changes (e.g., cancellations) may be noted on them.

Special Session: Student Paper Award Competition. Student Paper Awards are intended to recognize student research and encourage students to present and publish professional quality papers. Undergraduate and graduate students are invited to participate in the annual competition. Prior to the conference, students provide copies of their papers to the committee chair who is

responsible for distributing them to a selection committee. The papers must be presented orally at the conference in a single session and heard by the committee. Consequently, *this session must not conflict with other sessions in which members of the selection committee are involved.* Further details and the name of the competition coordinator can be found on the PAS website.

Concurrent sessions. Recent conferences typically offer 3-5 concurrent paper sessions, with an additional poster session. It is important to not schedule the same author at the same time or nearby times in two concurrent sessions (including poster sessions). Moreover, judges of the Student Paper/Poster Award sessions should not be scheduled in any concurrent session (contact the competition coordinator for names of judges). In planning concurrent sessions, it is ideal to schedule unlike topics simultaneously in order to make it easier for attendees to select sessions of interest. A greater number of concurrent sessions requires more conference meeting rooms, which increase conference costs. For these reasons, the goal is fewer concurrent sessions when possible.

Presentation length. Prior to the conference the organizer should decide on the length of paper presentations. Usually, 20 minutes are permitted per speaker (3 per hour), although 15 minutes (4 per hour) are becoming the norm at most other conferences. Another possibility is to organize special general sessions on a topic such as “site reports,” which allow only 10 minutes (6 per hour) for quick and concise presentations. Individual presentation lengths bear on session lengths and affect the number of required concurrent sessions.

Loading of Presentations. Most paper presentations are associated with projected digital media, such as PowerPoint.

- Inform all paper presenters on the meeting website and in official notices accepting presentations that it is their responsibility to load presentations prior to their session. Presentations given in morning sessions should be loaded onto the computer in the individual’s session room prior to the first morning paper, typically before 8-8:30 a.m. The appointed room monitor for that session should realize that early arrival to assist in loading presentations. Presentations given in afternoon sessions should be loaded onto the computer in the individual’s session room during the noon break prior to the first afternoon paper, typically before 1-1:30 p.m. *It is unacceptable to load a presentation once a session has started.*
- Organizers should ensure that a folder exists on the computer desktop for each session into which participants may load presentations. These folders should be clearly marked with session numbers and titles.
- It is incumbent on participants to insure that their PowerPoint or other presentation format will load and work properly on Microsoft-compatible computers. To that end, a Presentation Preview Room (see above) may be provided where one can preview presentations on conference-compatible software to ensure correct performance.

Room size. The conference venue may offer meeting rooms of different sizes or the organizers may request variously sized rooms. Sessions should be assigned to room sizes based on their presumed popularity and projected attendance.

Meeting Room Security. The security of equipment (computers, projectors) in the meeting rooms must be considered. It may be necessary to post a room monitor in each room between sessions (e.g., over the lunch hour). Do not expect the facility staff to provide security for equipment in unmanned rooms. Arrange to have each session room locked by the hotel after termination of the last session. Otherwise, a secure room should be acquired for overnight storage of equipment. This room may be used for equipment taken down between sessions or over the lunch hour, as necessary (this will require additional set-up and take-down time each day).

Budgetary concerns: include costs for rooms, computers, projectors, projection screens, remote pointers, microphones, podia, and room/door session schedule posters. All student participants in the paper competition and lead authors in the poster competition are given two free tickets to the banquet, covered by the conference (actual monetary awards to the winners are covered by PAS). Coordinate with the Student Paper Award committee chair in advance of the conference to learn the number of student participants and if there are additional perks for participants in the competition, such as free exhibitor books, t-shirts, etc.

Poster Sessions

Organization. Poster sessions can occur for a half day, over an entire morning or afternoon (creating five potential poster session time-slots), although some conferences in the past have scheduled them as two-hour sessions. If more than a single poster session occurs during the same time, they may be organized in different rows or sections of the poster display room. Some past conferences have permitted a full hour in the mid-morning or mid-afternoon for exclusive viewing of posters, conveniently scheduled along with coffee and snack breaks. This helps to increase the visibility of poster presentations, which would otherwise be competing with concurrent paper sessions.

Format. The typical format for poster displays is up to a 4' x 8' peg or Velcro board on a free stand (two-sided), sometimes adjacent to a narrow table. Some hotels allow presenters to mount their posters directly to the wall with painter's tape, removable adhesive tabs, or other facility-approved method. However, format size varies and must be specified on the conference website at the time of abstract submission. While presenters may bring their own materials, the conference should make available extra thumb tacks, adhesives, or Velcro strips, depending on format. A room assistant may be provided to offer these materials and assist with poster hanging.

Location. A separate room is required for poster sessions. In some conferences, this location is combined with the book/exhibit room since open conversation is expected for these sessions and for the sale of books and other merchandise.

Special Session: Student Poster Award Competition. Student Poster Awards are intended to recognize student research and encourage students to present professional quality posters of their research. Undergraduate and graduate students are invited to participate in this annual competition. Frequently, posters are co-authored by many individuals, including faculty. The student in the competition should be listed as first author. Further details can be found on the PAS website.

Budgetary concerns: include costs for the room, poster display boards, tables (if necessary), and display accessories (tacks, adhesive, Velcro). Currently, the winner of the poster competition and a guest are given banquet tickets with costs covered by the conference (prize money is covered by PAS).

Lunch Breaks and Round Table Lunches

Lunch Breaks. Lunches should last at least one hour and ideally 1.5 hours. Attendees should have a list or map in their conference packets pointing out nearby restaurants.

Round Table Lunches. These lunches have been organized at past meetings (e.g., the Student Affairs Committee luncheon). One scheme has an “expert” sit at each of several round tables, which offer seating for 5-7 additional people. While eating a catered lunch, and immediately afterward, the expert guides discussion on a specific topic. This arrangement permits intimate interaction and meeting of attendees with leaders in various aspects of Plains anthropology. Another scheme utilizes one or more hosts or moderators for an entire room of luncheon guests; the moderators then lead discussion from a podium, but may move around the room for more intimate interactions. The conference organizer may solicit individuals to lead round table lunches or PAS members may propose leading such lunches to the organizer. Round table organizers must provide all relevant information (e.g., topics, maximum number of participants, fees other than food, audio-visual needs) to conference organizers and work with them to ascertain hotel lunch prices and the ultimate luncheon fee prior to conference pre-registration dates. Participants must pre-register for the round tables which may be held on Thursday or Friday.

Budgetary concerns: costs of round table lunches may be carried by participants and include room and lunch costs. In addition, the costs of lunches for the moderators and other fees (e.g., AV equipment) should be worked into registrant fees. The cost per individual should be determined in advance and be included on the conference website for registration. The PAS Board decided in 2017 to help cover the cost of roundtable lunches for students organized by the Student Affairs Committee. NOTE: more informal off-site lunches at local restaurants have been arranged on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Conference Reception

The reception is the main welcoming event after the first day of the conference. It is typically held Thursday evening after dinner, from 7-9 p.m. It may occur at the conference venue or at another location, such as a local museum or other place of interest. In the latter, transportation (e.g., buses) must be arranged and budgeted if the location is distant. Food, hors d'oeuvres, and drinks are commonly served and time is permitted to view exhibits. In some past conferences light background music has been arranged.

Dance. In some past conferences a band was hired for the Thursday evening reception. This typically begins around 8-9 p.m., continuing as long as the venue or local law permits. Some conferences have contracted with a local bar that has a band hired with the guarantee that they will sell enough beverages to make it worthwhile for them to close the facility to the public and not charge a cover. The type of band is a difficult issue. It is a good idea to consult with students, who typically have a good handle on the local music scene.

Budgetary concerns: Frequently, the reception is hosted by an institution, such as a museum or state archeological service, which covers all or many of the costs as a contribution to the conference. If this is not the case, budget must be allowed for the room or meeting site, food, drinks, transportation, and music.

Business Meeting

The annual business meeting is scheduled for late Friday afternoon, before the banquet, typically about 5 p.m. The business meeting typically lasts an hour depending on the number of items on the agenda. The PAS President moderates the meeting and sets the agenda. Business meeting attendance is variable, but it is ideal to have a room large enough to accommodate up to 120 people. A podium, microphone, computer, projector, and projection screen may be required. Audiovisual equipment needs should be confirmed with the PAS President prior to the conference.

Budgetary concerns: costs for the room, podium, microphone, computer, projector, and projection screen should be considered.

Pre-Banquet Cash Bar

Following the close of presentations on Friday, and for about 1-1.5 hours prior to the banquet, a cash bar is offered with beer, wine, and mixed drinks. To reduce costs to participants, it may be possible to utilize kegged beer or unopened bottles of wine that were purchased and remain unused from Wednesday's Early Bird Party. This possibility should be discussed in advance with the venue's managers so that they know to save leftovers from Wednesday night for Friday night (it may also be possible to serve these leftover drinks during the Banquet or afterward during the banquet presentations). Frequently, the cash bar may commence and partially overlap with the Business Meeting, but it should run long enough to permit participants of the Business Meeting a drink or two after that meeting ends and prior to the banquet. The cash bar is typically located close to the banquet room.

Budgetary concerns: Costs for the room or hallway and for certified or licensed bartenders (which are usually arranged through the conference venue/hotel).

Banquet

Held Friday evening after the business meeting and cash bar, the banquet is an optional add-on for attendees, selectable at conference pre-registration. It is typically arranged through the conference hotel, and costs are consequently high. The hotel will generally give a flat per-person rate, typically \$40-\$60 in the mid-2010s. Ideally, costs should be as low as possible to encourage good banquet attendance. Between 25-50% of conference registrants may attend. Menu options should be pre-negotiated with the venue to reduce costs (see below). Light music may be offered during part of the banquet. As people complete their dinners, the President gives a presentation discussing the state of the PAS, and makes some remarks about the conference. In addition, various awards are presented and resolutions are offered. The banquet speaker then follows (see below).

Organization. A “head” or reserved table(s) for the PAS President, banquet speaker, Distinguished Service Award winner (if any), their spouses, and others is common. These tables have occasionally included conference organizers and board members, but many of them may prefer general seating (the specifics should be worked out in advance with the President and Board). An important decision is whether or not to have buffet-style or table serving. Menu diversity is desirable with options for beef, chicken, vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free entrées. Be mindful of any dietary restrictions or allergies indicated by attendees when they registered on the website (the online registration system has a field for people to list any specific dietary restrictions, but talk with the caterer about options for specific issues). A bottle of red wine and a bottle of white wine may be included for each table, if the budget permits. Tickets color coded by meal type can be displayed on the table to help the servers. It is important to learn from the banquet facility when they need a final count to help determine when to stop selling banquet tickets at the registration desk (if at all possible) to those who did not pre-register for them.

Budgetary concerns: food and wine are covered by participant registration fees, but a podium, pointer, computer, projector and screen are necessary for presentations by the President and banquet speaker (see below), which may incur additional costs. Complimentary dinners are required for the banquet speaker and spouse (if present), the Distinguished Service Award Winner and guest (if an award is to be given), for participants in the student paper competition and one guest each, for the winner of the student poster competition and guest, and possibly for conference organizers (at the discretion of the conference organizers). Additional costs include background music (if present).

Distinguished Service Award

In most years a Distinguished Service Award (DSA) is given by the PAS Board based on findings of a standing committee. The awardee is typically a senior individual who has made outstanding and life-long contributions to Plains anthropology. This award is announced and given by the President during late or post-banquet remarks. In most cases the awardee is informed prior to the conference to insure their attendance.

Budgetary concerns: the awardee and a guest receive banquet tickets covered by the conference. Moreover, the DSA winner receives a complimentary hotel room. In some ideal cases the hotel conference package may include a complimentary room, which can be reserved for the DSA winner. Otherwise, coverage of this cost should be discussed and negotiated with the PAS President and Board.

Banquet Speaker

A speaker addressing a topic of interest to the anthropology of the Great Plains should be selected. The topic could include cultural or biological anthropology, archaeology, or history, and may relate to the Plains generally, or more specifically to the locality of the meeting. The banquet address is open to all meeting registrants whether attending the dinner or not, and additional seating should be provided within the banquet hall after the meal. On-line registrants have the option to indicate they will attend the banquet talk but not purchase a meal, thus allowing a good idea of additional seating that may be needed.

Budgetary concerns: an honorarium of \$250-\$500 should be offered to the speaker as well as banquet tickets for the speaker and a guest. Additional costs may include hotel, other meals, and travel for speakers coming from great distances.

INCOME, EXPENSES & FINANCES

The PAS Advance

The conference is organized and operates with its own account through Wells Fargo—it does not share the general PAS account. For this reason, the PAS advances the meeting organizers \$3,000 to provide a general fund for covering initial start-up costs. You will need to get the account materials (checkbook, debit card, etc.) sent to you from the previous year's conference organizing committee. It is best to assign one person (two people maximum) on the organizing committee to have access to the account, to track income and expenditures, and to make deposits and write checks as necessary throughout the planning process. Work with the PAS Treasurer to become a signatory on the account, which typically involves a trip to a local Wells Fargo branch in coordination with the Treasurer.

Conference organizers are responsible for signing or arranging various agreements and contracts early in the planning process, the most significant being the one for the conference venue. The PAS is ultimately the responsible entity for commitment to the hotel and meeting space, however, and therefore it is preferred that the PAS assume liability for these agreements or contracts. After meeting organizers have completed negotiations and are ready to sign a hotel and meeting facilities agreement(s) or contract(s), they must be forwarded to the PAS President and Treasurer for review. Once approved, the PAS President will sign and return the documents to the meeting organizers. Signatures of the host organizers on these documents are encouraged but are optional. Other contracts will likely be required for transportation, reception venue, reception catering, etc., and may require deposits. Keep copies of all contracts and agreements for PAS records.

Income Categories

Registration Fees. Beyond membership dues, the annual conference is the primary means for the PAS to acquire funds for operations and other endeavors. When planning a conference, it is important to estimate what total costs will be based on all expenses cited in previous sections. Once a solid estimate of total costs is made, it is most prudent to calculate a meeting registration fee that will cover the entire meeting cost. That way the cost of the meeting is covered and one does not have to worry about acquiring additional funding. Additional monies gained by the conference beyond those costs may be contributed to the PAS general fund. In past years various conferences have been able to contribute excess in the amount of thousands of dollars to the PAS general fund.

Registration fees are based on an estimated attendance, which ranges typically between 300-500 (although most meetings over the last 5-10 years have been closer to 300 than 500). In this calculation a substantially lower student registration fee should be considered, which reduces the total income. It is best to be conservative in these estimates. For example, if total meeting costs are estimated at \$40,000, and a conservative estimate of attendance is 350 individuals, one might

reduce this number to 325 to allow for about 50 students attendees (15% of registrants) paying half-price. This gives $\$40,000/325 = \123 per registrant. Rounding to \$125 for non-students and \$62.50 for students will yield $\$125 \times 300$ non-students = \$37,500 and $\$62.50 \times 50$ students = \$3,125 for a total of \$40,625.

Since 2015, the member registration rate has been at least \$125 and people expect it to be at least that. Non-member rates have been \$200 since 2015. Non-student registration rates should likely not be below \$125, with late registration and on-site rates being a good deal higher to encourage early registration which significantly helps with planning. Online PayPal transactions for registration through the website will be deposited directly into the conference account. Checks and cash sent via mail or received in person will need to be deposited locally.

Field Trips. Field trips are generally offered at cost, which includes food, transportation, venue fees, honoraria for leaders, and perhaps hotel costs for rare overnight trips (see above). Tour costs should be calculated to be close to actual expenses with income slightly exceeding expenses.

Merchandise. Organizers are encouraged to create and sell conference merchandise at a profit during the meeting. Sales of t-shirts, hats, cups, and other memorabilia can help subsidize other costs of the meeting. All should contain the meeting logo. Arrangements can be made with local or on-line shops for the production of baseball hats or t-shirts to any desired specification. Organizers should work with these manufacturers to determine the costs per item in advance of on-line registration. These costs can be raised somewhat to generate additional conference funds. Conference attendees will purchase items on-line before the conference or on-site at the registration table. On-line orders provide an indication of the number of items and of quantities of t-shirt sizes and varieties required (e.g., colors, long versus short sleeve) in advance of the conference. An extra 5-10% might be ordered for on-site sales. If sale items are leftover they can be handed over to the next meeting organizers and sold at a discount the following year. Shirts, hats, and other swag are typically good money makers and should be considered for every meeting.

Banquet tickets. These items should be priced to at least cover the cost of the per-person meal and any provided drinks (e.g., wine and coffee). Ideally, the banquet ticket should not cost more than \$50, but that rate has already been exceeded by 2018. Higher rates generally cause lower banquet attendance. However, organizers can add to the banquet fee to help cover the banquet tickets and honorarium for the post-banquet speaker or other complimentary banquet tickets (e.g., student paper presenters and student poster winners, their guests, and a Distinguished Service awardee and guest). On the other hand, if banquet costs are high these costs can be built into meeting registration fees and t-shirt or hat sales.

Advertisements. Companies, institutions, government agencies, university departments, and even individuals frequently wish to advertise their existence or services at the annual conference (see Appendix “Sponsors & Advertisers Indicated in Past Programs” for a list of possible advertisers). They should be actively sought as a source of income. Full or half-page ads might be sold and placed in the conference program. Printing of logos in the program can also be used to generate income, with various rates devised for all of the above. In addition to the foregoing,

advertisements and company logos might be displayed for a price at the conference in a variety of venues. For example, for a fee a corporate logo could be displayed on a session door or at the food table during a coffee break with a “sponsored by” notice. Poster advertisements for publishers, radiocarbon dating services, etc., can be displayed in the book/exhibit room for a fee. A screen saver can be developed with corporate logos or advertisements that is displayed in the conference meeting rooms between sessions.

Book Room & Exhibitor Space. The book/exhibit room requires space, which could add to conference costs depending on the nature of the hotel agreement. Regardless, fees should be charged to generate income, considering that many individuals (e.g., book sellers) are there to profit. A cost per table should be calculated. Some companies or individuals may require 2-3 tables. Chairs should be provided, and offering signage space similar to the free-standing boards employed for the poster displays may be desirable to some of the clients. Electrical outlets will likely be necessary for some displays as well as Wi-Fi access for credit card transactions.

Sponsorships and Donations. Another source of conference support is through donations by companies, government agencies, university departments, and individuals. They may be cash or “in-kind.” Cash donations represent an important source of income, and should be actively solicited (see Appendix “Sponsors & Advertisers Indicated in Past Programs” for a list of possible donors). In a university setting it is worthwhile to approach relevant department heads (Anthropology, Geology, History, etc.), deans of colleges, and specialized labs for donations. An incentive may be offered in the form of “free” advertisements and acknowledgments at the conference. Advertisements can be in the form of logos displayed in the conference program, on signage at the conference, and on screen-savers in meeting rooms. In-kind donations do not count as income because no money is exchanged. Examples include a university donating vans for conference tours or travel to a reception site, a local museum that hosts a conference reception or tour, a local brewery that donates a keg of beer. These institutions or companies should be cited in the conference program, perhaps including their logos, and at the banquet.

MEETING REGISTRATION, ABSTRACTS, & SYMPOSIA SUBMISSIONS

On-line Registration. The PAS website is the primary method by which members submit paper and poster abstracts, register for the conference, and make additional purchases (e.g., banquet and field trip tickets and conference merchandise). Organizers will work with the Webmaster to arrange the nature of information that will appear on the conference website. This information will be added to the website in the form of various PDFs that conference organizers will create and provide to the Webmaster as they are ready to post. These PDFs will include all information attendees will need to register, including prices and deadlines. They may include (but are not limited to):

- A welcome message (which should include general information about the meeting locale)
- A call for papers
- A general conference schedule
- Information about lodging, accommodations, and transportation
- Information about registration and fees

- Field trip summaries
- Conference merchandise options
- Information for vendors and advertisers
- Announcement of the banquet speaker, their bio, and presentation title
- Student events
- Refund policy

There is a tutorial on the website providing guidance to users on how to register on-line. The Webmaster is the primary contact person if registrants report issues concerning the website's functionality, or if people have questions about their on-line selections or transactions. Until the deadlines for registration and abstract submissions close, organizers will not be able to access registration data. These data must be requested from the Webmaster. Individuals must be logged into their PAS user account in order to register. A person must register before they are authorized to submit an abstract (see the abstract section below).

Once the submission deadline closes, the Webmaster will collate all registration information into an Excel spreadsheet. This spreadsheet will contain all information about each attendee's registration selections. This is the list organizers will likely use to generate name badges, so editing of names and affiliations in this spreadsheet will be necessary. This is the list that will also allow organizers to finalize numbers for the manufacture of merchandise and to provide the banquet venue with numbers of attendees and account for allergies and dietary restrictions. Note that this list from the Webmaster will only include registrants who paid on-line. *All registrants who paid via another method will need to be manually added to the attendance list.*

The basic PAS Conference webpage is now in place. It is up to the organizers to send the PDFs with all of the relevant information before the website can go live for a particular conference. It may take a several days for everything to get linked on the website, for prices to be updated, etc., so plan accordingly. Ideally this information would be sent to the PAS Webmaster before the start of the summer field season (by May 20). This way, all the information can get posted over the summer and then, in coordination with the Webmaster and conference organizers, a "Go Live" date for registration and abstracts can be established and announced. Typically, the registration and abstract portal will go live at least two months before the meeting, if not sooner.

On-line Abstract Portal. The PAS conference webpage has an on-line abstract submission portal. It is most convenient if every abstract gets submitted through this system. It is designed to allow multiple authors to be added, it gives options for a paper or poster in a general session, a student paper or poster, or a paper or poster in an organized session (symposium). After the submission deadline, the PAS Webmaster will retrieve the data in this system and send it to the conference organizers. The data occurs in an Excel spreadsheet format, with each column representing a different data field. The abstract submission portal automatically sends a confirmation to the submitter when the abstract has been submitted. However, as this is an automated e-mail it often goes to SPAM folders.

NOTE: Abstracts cannot be submitted until the presenter has logged into their PAS user account and registered for the meeting. This "paywall" on the abstract form is crucial to the prevention of SPAM infiltrating the abstract submission form.

Symposia/Special Session Proposals. Deadlines for symposia proposal submissions (paper and poster) are typically two weeks before the deadline for general abstract submission (this avoids the possibility of a symposium proposal being rejected after invited presenters have written titles and abstracts specific to it). Symposia abstracts should be submitted through the abstract submission portal. This will include the organizer(s) name(s), the symposium title, and the abstract for the session. Additional session information, including a list of presenters and individual paper titles, should be sent to the conference organizers by e-mail. The conference organizers are then responsible for notifying symposia organizers whether their proposals have been accepted. Once the session is accepted to the conference, individual authors will still need to submit their abstracts via the on-line portal. When doing so they should include the symposium title.

Abstract Submission Policies. It is PAS policy that presenters at the conference must be current PAS members. For co-authored papers, the first author must be a member. The PAS website will not permit the submission of an abstract by presenters whose PAS memberships are not current for that year. A member can be the senior author on only a single paper or poster, but may be a junior author in any number of presentations. If an individual attempting to submit an abstract realizes they need to purchase or renew their membership first, they will need to do so through the PAS website. Once that transaction has been processed, they will be able to submit the abstract successfully. Individual conference organizers have the option to allow non-members to present at the meeting.

Once the abstract submission deadline closes, the Webmaster will collate all abstract submission information into an Excel spreadsheet. This spreadsheet will contain all information regarding each abstract (title, author[s], affiliations, abstract, symposia participation [if relevant]). After manually adding any abstracts submitted via paper or by e-mail, this is the spreadsheet organizers will use to put together the conference program. There will inevitably be typos and other errors in this spreadsheet, so it is important to carefully and thoroughly edit these data.

Social Media. Conference organizers are encouraged to contact the PAS Board and the Student Affairs Committee for the contact information of social media administrators. Conference announcements (Call for Papers, deadlines, etc.) are suggested posts. On-going posts leading up to the conference are also encouraged.

THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM

The conference program and its organization are essential to a successful meeting. It is a large undertaking and one that must be correct in all details. Draft programs may be created and posted to the conference website many weeks or even months prior to the conference to give the membership an idea of conference content. This can be beneficial because a preview may minimize errata as presenters find mistakes and offer corrections. The program can then be revised prior to printing hard copies. Regardless, the final program should be completed a few weeks in advance of the conference dates. This is important because (1) the printing service that will actually print and bind the program will need time to accomplish this task for several hundred programs, (2) conference attendees will be anxious to see the final program in order to

plan their conference, and (3) presenters will want to learn the dates and times of their presentations. The final conference program should be posted to the PAS Conference website as a PDF file as soon as it is ready (graphical images in the program can substantially and unnecessarily contribute to file size; be sure to compress the PDF file so that its size is reasonable for membership downloads).

Printing

Some months before the conference the organizer should contact several printing services (e.g., Kinkos, Office Max, University Printing Office, and other vendors) to obtain quotations for the printing and binding of the program. Key variables to consider are the number of pages, the type or quality of the paper, page size (8.5" x 11"; 6" x 9"; etc.), the type of cover (card stock, plastic, etc.), type of binding (perfect, saddle stitch, coil, comb, etc.), and their corresponding costs. Color images may increase costs, so their number is typically minimized (it may be necessary to print corporate and donor logos in color). Get a quote on prices and be sure to indicate that your program will likely contain 150-200 pages.

Another issue is the amount of time the printing service will need to create the programs. It is best to submit a PDF file containing the full program to the printing service, because the formatting cannot be changed you can expect the deliverable to be an exact copy of the file you submit to them. This is not always true of a Microsoft Word file. Talk with the printer about their preferred file format.

Principle Sections of the Program

The following lists the principle sections and other matter that should minimally be contained within the conference program. Variations from the order indicated are certainly permitted. It is a good idea to contact the previous year's meeting organizers to request digital copies (in MS Word format) of past programs, which may serve as models for content and formatting.

1) **Title page & cover** should include "XXth Plains Anthropological Conference," dates, "Conference Program & Abstracts," the conference logo, meeting location (hotel or conference center, town, and state), hosting institutions, and perhaps logos for key sponsors.

2) Front Matter:

- Acknowledgments should include the names and affiliations of the conference organizing committee
- About the Conference Logo should describe the source and interpretation of the logo
- Welcome statement from conference organizers
- Logos and list of conference sponsors, several per page
- Advertisements may be placed here as a group, or interspersed through the program. They may include half or full-page ads as a source of conference revenue from various companies, corporations, sponsors, and institutions (see Appendix: Sponsors & Advertisers Indicated in Past Programs).
- Table of Contents may be given, with page numbers to key sections
- List of conference vendors & exhibitors
- Optional: Letter of Greeting from town mayor or university chancellor, etc.

3) **General Information:** (Physical Infrastructure & Warnings)

- Conference Headquarters: address, phone and website
- Local transportation & transportation from airport: including taxi service contacts, Uber, key bus lines, airport shuttles, hotel shuttles
- Parking: including hotel and nearby public parking facilities
- Registration: location and times of meeting registration table
- Presentation Preview Area: location and hours
- Paper Sessions: names of paper session rooms
- Poster sessions: names of poster session rooms
- Vendors & Exhibitors: Location and time of book/exhibit room availability
- Notice to Session Moderators & Presenters: a general reminder to keep sessions on schedule
- Reminder to Quiet Cell Phones

4) **Conference Schedule of Events** (Giving days and times of each)

- Early Bird Party
- Board Meetings
- Coffee & Snack Breaks
- Conference Reception
- Business Meeting
- Pre-Banquet Cash Bar
- Banquet
- Banquet Speaker
- Workshops
- Luncheons
- Other Special Events
- Conference Tours

5) **Presentation Schedule**

Sessions are grouped by conference day and by morning or afternoon. Each session is typically numbered (for easy reference). Included for each session should be its title, type of session (general or symposium), names of organizers/moderators, and room name. For each paper session, presentations are listed by time, followed by the author(s)'s name and paper title.

Example:

SATURDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 7, 2017

Session 25, Da Vinci Room

General Session: *Great Plains Archaeology, Part II*

Amy Bleier, Moderator

8:00-8:20 Chérie Haury-Artz: *Iowa in the Time of Shakespeare: Partnering Outside the Box to Expand the Range of Archaeology Education*

8:20-8:40 Rob Bozell, Phil Geib, Matthew E. Hill, Jr., Adam Wiewel and Courtney Ziska: *New Archeological Investigation of Apache Life in the Nebraska Sand Hills*

8:40-9:00 William Eckerle and Dan Eakin: *Geoarchaeology of the Fort Laramie 1851 Horse Creek Treaty Site, Morrill, Nebraska*

Participants in poster sessions and poster symposia are listed similarly, but the entire session is given a time range. Each poster may be given an identifying number or letter that attendees may match to poster display boards in the poster session room.

Example:

Session 7, Van Gogh-Remington Room

General Poster Session: *Great Plains Anthropology, Part II*

10:10-12:00

A. Mary Adair and Alexandra Kern: *The Linden Collection of Great Bend Materials from Rice County, Kansas*

B. Sara Anderson, Amy Neumann, Catherine Elliot, Effie Athanassopolous: *Campus Archaeology: Historic Ceramics from an Early Lincoln Neighborhood*

C. Brandi Bethke: *Vertebrate Faunal Remains from the 2013 Excavations at the Boarding School Site, Glacier County, MT*

D. Steven De Vore, Ashley Barnett, Holly Staggs, Gosia Mahoney, and Blair Schneider: *Magnetic Survey of the Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site, North Dakota*

6) Special Session Abstracts

The title, session number, day, time, organizer(s), and abstract are listed in the sequence in which they occur.

- Symposia
- Forums, Focus Groups
- Roundtables
- Workshops
- Student Paper Competition

7) Paper & Poster Abstracts

The author(s), their affiliation(s), session number, title, and abstract are given, sorted by lead author surname. Secondary authors names are also included as distinct entries in the sorted list, with a pointer to the lead author's name. *Example:* Doe, John, see Smith, Jane.

8) End Matter

- Notice of next year's conference site, dates, organizers, and institutions
- Board of Directors and Members at Large
- Past conference locations by year
- Past PAS Presidents by year
- Distinguished Service Award recipients by year
- Native American Award recipients by year
- Student Paper Award recipients by year
- Student Poster Award recipients by year
- Blank pages for notes
- Hotel meeting rooms floor plans

- Condensed meeting time table summary in grid matrix for easy reference

9) Errata

Inevitably, errors of fact or omissions may occur in the program which are discovered after its printing. Some of the errors include last-minute cancellations by presenters. Corrections and additions may be printed on a separate sheet which may be inserted in the programs directly or in conference bags.

POST-CONFERENCE BUSINESS

Following the conference, host organizers will need to pay the bills incurred for the meeting. The hotel, meeting facilities, event spaces, merchandise vendors, and other expenses need to be paid promptly out of the PAS conference account. Good vendors are necessary for future conference success and therefore hosts should ensure that payments are made promptly and in full so that future organizers will be able to continue using these vendors. It is important that the PAS maintain a level of professionalism in this regard for the benefit of future organizers. Please work with your vendors in advance to calculate the amounts owed and set payment schedules.

POST-CONFERENCE REPORT

Bookkeeping

A final duty of the conference organizer(s) is to provide a written account of income and expenses associated with the conference to the PAS Treasurer and Board of Directors. Since the Society has non-profit status, it is important to remember that all income is collected in the service of the PAS's mission and that the funds are spent for a designated purpose. Most conferences make a profit, though how much varies from year to year. This profit is used by the Society to help with other expenses, such as the journal and student awards, and it is the primary means by which the PAS can generate income. Please remember that this profit is for the PAS and should be left in the Wells Fargo account until removed by the PAS Treasurer. Preparing a summary budget is very helpful for anyone planning to host a future conference, as the relative and actual costs of various parts of the conference may be used to prepare a working budget. At a minimum, the accounting of the conference should provide an itemized list of all monetary income (do not include in-kind contributions or donations other than cash) and expenditures. A clear bookkeeping system must be established during the early planning stages and maintained until all bills related to the conference are paid. The designated bookkeeper should be authorized to write checks, provide receipts, and issue refunds in collaboration with the PAS Treasurer.

An Itemized List of Income includes:

- Number of advance registered students and advance registered regular attendees with dollar amounts
- Number of on-site registered students and on-site registered regular attendees with dollar amounts
- Cash contributions and donations
- Number of banquet and roundtable luncheon ticket sales with dollar amounts

- Sale of merchandise (baseball hats, t-shirts and other items)
- Tour ticket sales
- Book/exhibit room income

A List of Expenses includes:

- Guest speaker expenses, such as travel, honorarium, and banquet tickets
- Vehicle costs (buses for tours, vans or other conveyances for transportation to Thursday reception)
- Hotel costs (the hotel normally will itemize a master bill, but make sure an itemized list is requested during initial negotiations). The itemized list should include:
 - Meeting and other rooms billed to the master account
 - Board meeting room
 - Board meeting dinner
 - Banquet room
 - Banquet food and liquor
 - Coffee and snacks
 - Roundtable luncheon(s)
 - Kegs/catering for the Early Bird Party
- Audiovisual/equipment rental if not included with the hotel
- Office expenses (e.g., phone bills, postage, supplies, name tags, etc.)
- Merchandise production (t-shirts, hats)
- Program preparation (including design/artwork) and printing
- Pre-conference expenses (e.g., travel for conference chairs, etc.)
- Bands for Early Bird Party, Reception, or Banquet (if any)
- Commemorative items (cups, key chains, etc., distributed at registration)
- Miscellaneous (anything else not included above)

While it is not necessary to include donated time and services in the final budget, it is very helpful to future conference organizers to account for these in the summary budget. It also is helpful to note the number of volunteers and approximate number of donated hours.

All expenses must be documented with a receipt. Do not rely on canceled checks as appropriate receipts, because checks to the hotel, for example, may include more than one type of expense.

Request itemized receipts for all expenses.

Refunds

Two types of refunds are possible. The first type includes refunds to advance registrants who must cancel their trip to the conference. Determine which refunds will or will not be given and set a deadline for refunds due to cancellations that is posted on the registration website. *Strictly enforce the deadline.* A handling fee may be assessed for cancellations after a specified date. Remember that the main income for the conference comes from registration fees, so you cannot afford to make many last minute refunds. However, there may be exceptions to the deadline and each conference chair should use their best judgment to determine exceptions. Exceptions are made in situations such as family emergencies or military deployment.

Refunds may also be due to conference organizers. When ordering important items such as the conference program, t-shirts, number of kegs at the Early Bird Party, or the banquet menu it is important to stipulate, in writing, a delivery date or quality of a product. For example, when t-shirt orders are placed, come to terms with the company on the number of shirts, color(s), sizes, and the date when the order will be complete. If the company does not deliver according to the agreement, a refund is due. It may cause stress for a conference organizer to initiate such an agreement, but when in place the conference cannot be charged for something not received.

Archival Documents

Upon completion of the conference, the organizer(s) shall send one copy of the program and other significant documents (e.g., conference announcements, host report, etc.) to the Plains Anthropological Society Archives.

Doris Peterson, Archives Associate
University of South Dakota Library Archives & Special Collections
University Libraries
University of South Dakota
414 E Clark St
Vermillion, SD 57069
E-mail: speccoll@usd.edu

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Authors of the original guide were Mary Adair (University of Kansas), Rob Bozell (Nebraska State Historical Society), Mary Lou Larson (University of Wyoming), and Bill Lees (Oklahoma Historical Society). Mary Lou Larson and Mike Metcalf (Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc.) made subsequent revisions in 1999-2001, Lauren Ritterbush (Kansas State University) and Tom Thiessen (Midwest Archaeological Center, NPS) in 2002, Amy Bleier (State Historical Society of North Dakota) in 2010, 2014, and 2017, Ken Kvamme (University of Arkansas) in 2017-2018, Jay Sturdevant (Midwest Archeological Center, Lincoln), Chris Johnston (Paleocultural Research Group), and Wendi Field Murray (State Historical Society of North Dakota) in 2018.

APPENDIX: SPONSORS & ADVERTISERS INDICATED IN PAST PROGRAMS

2013 (Loveland, CO): Maney Publishing, History Colorado, Paleowest Archaeology, Colorado State University Department of Anthropology, Colorado State University College of Liberal Arts, Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc., Center for Mountain & Plains Archaeology, University of Nebraska Department of Anthropology, Beta Analytic Inc.

2014 (Fayetteville, AR): Maney Publishing, University of Arkansas Archo-Imaging Lab, University of Arkansas Environmental Dynamics Program, University of Arkansas Department of Anthropology, University of Arkansas Graduate School, University of Arkansas College of Arts & Sciences, University of Arkansas Research & Economic Development, University of

Arkansas Department of Geosciences, University of Arkansas Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies, Arkansas Archeological Survey, Nebraska Association of Professional Archaeologists, University of Wyoming Paleoindian Research Lab, Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc., QLC ArcheoLink–Americas, Beta Analytic Inc., Larry Lahren, Elliot Werner Publications

2015 (Iowa City, IA): Beta Analytic Inc., ArcheoLinks Americas, Ethnoscience, Inc., Cooley Auto Sales, University of Wyoming Paleoindian Research Lab, R. Christopher Goodwin Associates, Inc., The Archaeological Conservancy, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Elliot Werner Publications, Iowa City Downtown District, Marshalltown Company, University of Utah Press, US Forest Service National Grasslands Visitor Center (Wall, SD), Office of the State Archaeologist of Iowa.

2016 (Lincoln, NE): National Park Service Midwest Archeological Center, Nebraska State Historical Society, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, The Cherokee Nation, Hub Engineers, Oklahoma Archeological Survey, Forestry Suppliers, University of Nebraska Press, ArcheoLink Americas, Nebraska Association of Professional Archaeologists, tDAR the Digital Archaeological Record, Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau, University of Utah Press, Center for Applied Isotope Studies, University of Nebraska Center for Great Plains Studies, Beta Analytic Inc.

2017 (Bismarck, ND): State Historical Society of North Dakota, US National Park Service, North Dakota Parks & Recreation, PaleoIndian Research Lab, PaleoCultural Research Group, North Dakota Archaeological Association, Archaeo-Physics, Geoscan Research, John P. Bluemle, SWCA, QLC ArcheoLink–Americas, DirectAMS, University of Georgia Center for Applied Isotope Studies, Laughing Sun Brewing Co.