Scholarly Paper Sessions – NACADA Annual Conference
Responsibilities and Expectations for Discussants and Moderators

Responsibilities for Discussants
(Updated 7/24/2021)

Impact
Your role as a Session Discussant for the NACADA 2021 Annual Conference helps authors/presenters enhance their paper and ultimately their scholarship. Your critical, honest, and constructive feedback makes authors/presenters better scholars, researchers, and writers. Your feedback also connects themes within your session for the attendees as well as to model the elements of scholarly discourse and helps articulate the expectations of scholarly work.

Responsibilities & Commitment

Before the Conference
• Familiarize yourself with the NACADA Annual Conference Portal.

• Authors/presenters are asked to submit their final papers by Saturday, September 1 at 5:00 pm Central Time. From here, you should read the two papers assigned to you. As a discussant, you should provide constructive feedback to assist the author(s) with revision (and to assist in preparing papers for publication if they have not yet been submitted to an academic journal).

• Feedback should be delivered both in writing to the respective authors, and orally to session attendees. Some discussants choose to also deliver a visual presentation of their comments (e.g., PowerPoint slides), but this is by no means required.

• Discussant comments are most helpful when they are largely integrative, emphasizing how the paper topics, theories, analyses, study designs, and methods of the papers in the session reveal or obscure important knowledge or ways of understanding issues in the area of academic advising.

• There are a variety of resources and thoughts on how to be a “good discussant” on the internet (e.g., “Tips on Being a Good Discussant”). We also encourage you to chat with colleagues and mentors about qualities that make an effective (and perhaps not-so-effective) discussant.

• You have agreed to be paired with a Discussant Apprentice. Thank you! The Apprentice will also read the two papers and prepare remarks to be given to the author(s) in writing, but they will not present them during the conference session. Either prior to the submission deadline, or shortly thereafter, please meet with the apprentice by phone or Zoom/Skype to discuss the
process you plan to use and to offer helpful advice. You are providing an important service to colleagues by sharing your expertise and promote deeper engagement with scholarly inquiry.

- If using powerpoint, the file should be sent prior to the conference to Wendy Troxel at wgtroxel@ksu.edu and brought on a flash drive (in case the file needs to be loaded just before the session). A laptop will be provided during the sessions so all of the presentations will be pre-loaded. Using a powerpoint presentation for your discussant remarks is **NOT REQUIRED**, and in fact, often detracts from your important feedback.

- Familiarize yourself with ways to make the session more accessible. Resources include: [How to Make Your Presentations Accessible to All, Using Personal Pronouns, Just Use A Microphone Already](#), and the [NACADA Presenter website](#).

**At the Conference, Before the Session:**
- Discussants are encouraged to arrive to the session at least 15 minutes early. There will likely be another session in the room prior to your session, so please be mindful and respectful of the often hectic transitions.

- The Session Moderator will gather Discussant and Presenters:
  - A laptop will be provided, with all presentation files preloaded. The Moderator will confirm that all powerpoint files are loaded before the session begins, and open them on the desktop. Files for paper #2 will be minimized, but ready for quick launch to minimize the time between presenters. See Appendix A for a list of A/V Provisions and note what is not provided by NACADA.

  - The Moderator will review the order of presentations with the presenters and discussant—this should follow the order in the program. **Note: This is important as some people “session hop” and plan their timing according to the list in the program.**

  - The Moderator will remind presenters and discussants of time allocations.

  - The Moderator will ensure name pronunciation of presenters and discussant; the discussant should take notes of this for their comments.

  - Be mindful of accessibility of sessions: Ensure the microphone is working, ensure there is ample room in the aisles, etc. If any issues arise, contact the NACADA Helpdesk.

**At the Conference, During the Session:**
- After papers are presented, the Discussant will have 10-15 minutes to deliver comments to authors/presenters and attendees. We encourage you to ensure there is time for audience Q&A. **Note: The Moderator is responsible for monitoring and enforcing time.**

- Session Agenda: (60 minutes)
  - Chair introduces themselves and the session (name, organization/institution, role) and reviews the agenda/timing of the session (1 minute)
  - Chair introduces Paper #1 and presenters—name(s), institution(s), paper title (30
seconds)
- Paper #1 (15 minutes)
- Chair introduces Paper #2 and presenters—name(s), institution(s), paper title (30 seconds)
- Paper #2 (15 minutes)
- Chair introduces Discussant and Discussant Apprentice (30 seconds)
- Discussant (10-15 minutes)
- Open Q&A (10-15 minutes)

- Keep time for the presenters and discussant, alerting them when 5 minutes, 1 minute, and 0 minutes remain. (Signs will be provided.)

- Facilitate the Q&A session by opening the floor and ensuring attendees are duly recognized.

At the Conference, After the Session:
- Provide written feedback to authors/presenters
- Be available for any follow up questions the author/presenters may have

At the Conference, you can work with your Moderator if you have questions and issues. The NACADA Research Staff will be available to support Moderators and Discussants with questions and issues. The phone number will be provided prior to the conference.
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Responsibilities for Moderators
(Updated 7/24/2021)

At the Conference, Before the Session:
- Check date, time, and room location
- Moderators are encouraged to arrive to the session at least 15 minutes early. There will likely be another session in the room prior to your session, so please be mindful and respectful of other sessions.
- The Moderator will gather Discussant and Presenters:
  - The Moderator will be sure that the Session Title Slide and Agenda, and presentations for the two papers are loaded onto the supplied laptop, opened, and minimized. If the Discussant is using any visual file, be sure that it is loaded, as well. If they are not already loaded prior to the session, or if the presenters request that the file be updated, coordinate the process for loading the files from their thumb/flash drives. See Appendix A for a list of A/V Provisions and note what is not provided by NACADA.
  - The Moderator will review the order of presentations with the presenters and discussant—this should follow the order in the program. Note: This is important as some people “session hop” and plan their timing according to the list in the program.
  - The Moderator will remind presenters and discussants of time allocations.
  - The Moderator will ensure name pronunciation of presenters and discussant; the discussant should take notes of this for their comments.

At the Conference, During the Session:
- After papers are presented, the Discussant will have 10-15 minutes to deliver comments to authors/presenters and attendees. We encourage you to ensure there is time for audience Q&A. Note: The Chair is responsible for monitoring and enforcing time.
- Session Agenda: (60 minutes)
  - Chair: Using the script provided, introduce yourself and the session (name, organization/institution, role) and reviews the agenda/timing of the session (1 minute) – powerpoint slides #1 and #2
  - Chair introduces Paper #1 and presenters—name(s), institution(s), paper title (30 seconds) – powerpoint slide #3 (Paper #1 Title Slide)
  - Paper #1 (15 minutes) – powerpoint slides from presenter(s)
  - Chair introduces Paper #2 and presenters—name(s), institution(s), paper title (30 seconds) – powerpoint slide (Paper #2 Title Slide)
  - Paper #2 (15 minutes) - powerpoint slides from presenter(s)
  - Chair introduces Discussant and Discussant Apprentice (30 seconds) – powerpoint slide
(Discussant Title Slide)
- Discussant (10-15 minutes) – if Discussant does not have ppt slides, leave on Discussant Title Slide
- Open Q&A (10-15 minutes)

- Keep time for the presenters and discussant, alerting them when 5 minutes, 1 minute, and 0 minutes remain, using the cards provided in the room. Please be firm on time limits.

At the Conference, After the Session:
- Close the powerpoint files to be ready for the next session.
- Be sure that the Discussant provides written feedback to authors/presenters
- Be available for any follow up questions the author/presenters and discussants may have

At the Conference, you can work with your Moderator if you have questions and issues. The NACADA Research Staff will be available to support Moderators and Discussants with questions and issues. The phone number will be provided prior to the conference.
APPENDIX A


NACADA will provide the following for your session:
- Podium with wireless microphone
- Projector and screen
- Laptop computer (If you are using a powerpoint file (it is not recommended as a discussant) you must send the file to Wendy Troxel at wgtroxel@ksu.edu no later than September 30, 2021.

NACADA does not provide the following:
- Laptop computer for any other presentations (concurrent sessions, pre-conference workshops, etc.)
- Adaptors for Mac or PC (e.g. VGA to USB, mini-USB)
- Wired internet connection, or stable wireless internet connection (streaming is not available)
APPENDIX B

Timeline, Training, and Support

**Timeline**
Spring  
Apply for Discussant positions through the NACADA Conference Portal

July  
Notification of Assignment

August  
Assignment of time, location, and session titles and abstracts

September 1  
Papers due to Chairs and Discussants  
Once submitted, Chairs read and comments on papers

September 30  
All powerpoint files due to Wendy Troxel at wgtroxel@ksu.edu

October 6-9  
Attend NACADA 2021 Annual Conference and serve as Discussant

**Training & Support**
This document, including appendices, serves as the main resource for Discussants and Moderators. NACADA Staff will also send a few email reminders as well as include information on the NACADA website.

The NACADA Research Staff is available leading up to the conference to answer questions and provide additional support as needed.

- Wendy Troxel, NACADA Center for Research at KSU, wgtroxel@ksu.edu – (309) 530-0493

**Qualifications for Discussants**

- Previous experience as a published author or editorial board member of an academic journal
- Expertise in the subject area or methodologies of the session for which they are assigned
- Ability to synthesize 2 different papers, find common themes, and deliver this summary to session attendees
- Ability to provide critical, honest, and constructive feedback to authors and openness for followup questions from authors (e.g., for clarity of comments).
- Willingness to provide mentorship to a Discussant Apprentice throughout the process
- Current membership in NACADA and registration for the NACADA 2021 Annual Conference (not provided by NACADA)