

Information and Advice for Presiders International Congress on Medieval Studies

A session's presider is responsible for the running of the session. Duties usually include:

- acting as master of ceremonies and time-keeper
- introducing session participants
- helping speakers with AV equipment and the distribution of handouts

Time Keeping

All Congress sessions are 90 minutes long.

In a session of papers, 60 minutes should be taken up by the papers themselves, and 30 minutes by introductions, distribution of handouts, final AV preparations, general to-ing and fro-ing, and—most important—discussion. (Roundtables, panel discussions, and workshops may be structured more loosely than sessions of papers.)

- In a session of 3 papers, each paper should be limited to 20 minutes.
- In a session of 4 papers, each paper should be limited to 15 minutes.
- In a session of 2 papers, speakers may be allowed 30 minutes for their papers.

The most common practice at the Congress is to reserve discussion until after all papers have been delivered, but there is no hard-and-fast rule concerning this.

We encourage presiders to be assertive in enforcing time limits; a well-run session with papers delivered within the time limit will be appreciated by participants and audience alike.

Introductions

Introductions in Congress sessions are generally short, but we encourage you to contact the speakers in advance in order to learn about them and their work. Contacting the speakers in advance also affords an opportunity to ask about AV equipment, handouts, and other logistical concerns.

AV Equipment and Handouts

The presider is expected to help ensure the smooth running of the session. If AV equipment needs trouble-shooting, presiders should be prepared to seek help from the AV staff in the building in which the session is scheduled.

Congress participants are expected to bring multiple copies of their handouts to the session, and presiders are expected to facilitate their distribution.