



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Medieval Institute

**International Congress
on Medieval Studies**

Information and Advice for Presiders 56th 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 and announcing their social media preferences
- moderating discussion

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, general to-ing and fro-ing, and—most important—discussion. (Sessions in other formats 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 5 papers, each paper should be limited to 12 minutes.
- In a session of 6 papers, each paper should be limited to 10 minutes.
- In a session of 2 papers, speakers may be allowed 30 minutes for their papers.

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.

Social Media

Session presiders are expected to inform audiences of speakers' preferences concerning the sharing of their presentations through social media. This means conveying restrictions and may mean announcing a speaker's Twitter handle.

The Virtual Experience

- For an optimal experience, download the Zoom client to your device(s), or, if already downloaded, update the app. (Zoom does not prompt users to update.)
- The Join Now link for each event goes live 20 minutes ahead of the scheduled start time on the meeting site; joining affords admittance to the waiting room. Presiders are encouraged to arrive promptly at that time.
- Make sure your Zoom name allows the tech host to recognize you.
- The first person listed as participating in the session will be admitted from the waiting room, made co-host of the session, and take responsibility for admitting other session participants from the waiting room.
- Scheduled participants interact for as long as 20 minutes in preparation for the session, testing screen sharing, etc.
- Those not actively involved in the session can be admitted from the waiting room at the start time or shortly before: the exact time will be up to session organizers and presiders.
- Chat is enabled for all events, and attendees may chat with Everyone or with other individuals attending the session.
- Screen Sharing is enabled for all attendees.

Recommended Procedures

As at an in-person Congress, it is the prerogative of session organizers and presiders to determine how sessions will run. We do, however, have some recommendations:

- Presiders should ask all to remain muted and with video off unless they are actively participating.
- Save comments and questions for after all scheduled contributions have been made.
- Contributors should be cognizant of microphone placement (e.g., shuffling papers near a microphone will diminish the experience for auditors); using a headset with a microphone will improve sound quality.
- Have attendees signal a desire to contribute by typing QUESTION in all capitals to Everyone in the Chat. (The Raise Hand feature might also be used, but it can be difficult for presiders to monitor.)
- Presiders may want to designate a colleague to help in monitoring the Chat and raised hands.