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Claremont
GRADUATE UNIVERSITY

Conference Paper Types

by Writing Center Staff

Following are descriptions of the types of conference presentations you may do as a graduate student. Presentation types differ among disciplines. For example, those in the humanities typically read their papers aloud at conferences, while social scientists give summary presentations of longer works.

Paper with Respondent. In this type of presentation, a speaker gives a thirty-minute paper. A respondent then gives a fifteen-minute response to the paper. The speaker subsequently gives a fifteen-minute reply to the response.

Panel Presentation. Panel sessions include 3-4 speakers, each of whom talks for 15-20 minutes. Panels may also have a discussant who comments on the papers/presentations individually and as a group.

Roundtable. A roundtable features five or more speakers, each of whom talks for 5-10 minutes.

Workshop. These sessions can vary in length from 90 minutes to one full day. Workshop presenters give short statements before involving the audience in some type of activity.

Poster/Poster Talk/Poster Presentation/Poster Discussion. All of these involve a visual presentation of ideas. Some presenters choose to display a 3- to 8-page paper that explains their project; others may post their hypothesis and an outline of their findings. The most eye-catching posters exhibit charts, graphs, photographs, or artwork.

Posters can be displayed for the length of the conference or for a single day.

Poster talks give the audience a chance to question the poster creator at a specified time.

Poster presentations feature 4-6 posters on a single theme displayed at a specific time. Each poster creator gives a short talk on his or her project.

Poster discussions also include 4-6 posters on a single theme displayed at a specific time. Conference-goers circulate around the room, questioning and collecting handouts from presenters. This type of presentation can also be called an interactive exhibit.