

Check-list for Preparing Abstracts for NAISA

- **Title: 120 character limit.**

- Does your title succinctly **describe** the content of your presentation?

Your prospective audience needs to be interested in your paper from the title before they will read the abstract, or choose to attend your session.

NAISA Council has been receiving consistent feedback that titles do not always describe a paper or session, making it difficult to choose what sessions/papers to attend. For the 2013 meeting, NAISA will post abstracts online, available to all registrants.

- **Abstract: 250 word limit.**

- Does your abstract answer the following questions? what (is this paper/session about), who (it is about or who the players are/were), when, where (geographic area of focus, if applicable), how (method used), and why (the question or inquiry or conclusions are important). Stating your findings or conclusions explicitly can prove very helpful to Program Committee readers in evaluating your proposal, and to Program readers looking for papers/sessions to attend.

- Does your abstract **begin** with your topic / focus / question?

If there is necessary background or contextual information, put it at the end. Over the years the Program Committee has been very frustrated by abstracts that use the 250 words to provide 220 words of background, and then only begin to give a clue what the paper is about in the last sentence.

- **Substance:** does the abstract describe the new knowledge, data, evidence, or interpretation that you are presenting to your field and to your colleagues?

- **Terms:** do you use discipline- or area-specific jargon or terminology?

NAISA is a very broadly interdisciplinary and international organization that includes community-based, as well as academic-based scholars. You may want to avoid, or be sure to define, specific terminology.

- Can the scope of your abstract be presented in 20 minutes?

It is not possible to present the ideas encompassed within an entire book manuscript or dissertation project in 20 minutes. If you are working on a large project, identify some chunk of it for a paper presentation. It takes two minutes to read a double-spaced page: twenty minute paper = ten pages, no more.

- Is the scope of your presentation appropriate to the venue?

Professional meetings are not an appropriate venue to present class papers that merely survey the literature within some academic field, unless some substantively new or creative interpretation of that literature is presented. Also, over the years, the NAISA Program Committee has been skeptical of proposals that claim to survey all of American Indian/Native/First Nations/Indigenous Studies conceptually, methodologically, ethically, or otherwise. That is simply too much to do in such a short time.

- To sum up: Is your abstract scholarly, focused, substantive, and descriptive?

- **Topics & Methods:** Because of NAISA's interdisciplinary and international character, the Program Committee welcomes a very broad range of topics and approaches. Please do not look at prior Programs to see if your topic has been covered

in the past, and decide not to submit because you do not see it. We are always working to expand our coverage of issues of import to Indigenous Studies and to Indigenous peoples.

- **Panel or Paper?** NAISA Program Committee strongly encourages its members to consider submitting a proposal for a panel/roundtable rather than an individual paper. Take this opportunity to think through the ways you and colleagues can shape a broader conversation in our field, set the context for your own contribution, and build professional relationships. Program Committee has seen a fascinating, and we think positive, development over the years in panel proposals. They have moved from “traditional” groupings of colleagues, often by geographic area and/or discipline (all western U.S. historians, for example, or all Iroquoian Studies colleagues) to increasingly interdisciplinary and international sets of colleagues interested in similar theories, questions, or methodologies. Often the associations that fuel these panels were made through meeting one another at NAISA.
- **Panel constitution?** Because Program Committee encourages the interdisciplinary and international cross-fertilization of ideas that NAISA meetings facilitate, the Committee discourages proposed panels composed entirely of graduate students, especially from the same program/department or institution. Use this opportunity to put together a panel that mixes junior and senior scholars, graduate students and others, and scholars from different institutions, communities, disciplines, and nations.
- **Panel or Roundtable?** A panel brings together 3 to 4 scholars, with a Chair and hopefully a Commentator, to present developed papers. Each presenter 20 minutes to present, with some time for questions at the conclusion of the panel. A Roundtable brings together a group interested in some defined topic of discussion, and opens that discussion up to include the audience. If scheduled participants are each talking for 15 minutes before opening up discussion, that is a panel, not a Roundtable. The Program Committee expects that panels and roundtables will include more than 2 presenters or participants.
- **Film Screening or other creative work:** based on submissions and queries in prior years, the Program Committee has added Film Screening as a category for proposals submitted for the 2013 annual meeting. Depending on time available and length of the film, screenings often include commentary by the producer, director, actors, those who use the film in classes, critics, or other interested parties. The Program Committee is open to other kinds of creative presentations and encourages those with ideas for alternative formats to please contact the NAISA Council.
- **Poster Session:** A poster session to present work done by graduate and undergraduate students was inaugurated at the 2012 annual meeting held at Mohegan Sun. The first poster session was organized by Prof. Alice Nash, of the New England Host Committee. Feedback was positive, and the Program Committee encourages, but cannot mandate, local hosts to organize a Poster Session in future meetings. Watch the local host website for more information.

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY OR CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN YOU MUST CANCEL YOUR ATTENDANCE

If presenters are not able to attend the meeting, they should contact the CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS as well as their session chair and discussant as soon as possible. The rate of late cancellations and no-shows has become a serious problem at NAISA meetings. In the last week before the annual meeting, panels have been left with as few as one presenter. We all know that emergencies happen, but our rate of cancellation indicates that apparently some members are submitting abstracts with no intention of attending the meeting, or with no clue how they might finance their attendance. Program Committee sympathizes with funding challenges, but please realize that by submitting a proposal, you have made a professional commitment to attend the conference if your abstract is accepted. When participants withdraw from the conference, especially at a late date, for other than emergency reasons, it seriously impacts their colleagues on shared panels and the audience.

Acceptance Rates of Proposed Abstracts (Data not complete for all meetings)

Meeting	Total # Proposals	Indiv paper Submitted/accepted	Panel Submitted/accepted	Roundtable Submitted/accepted	Total # sessions on program
2007 Oklahoma		89 / 73 (82%)	36 / 35 (97%)	N. A.	54
2008 Georgia		? / 98	? / 54	? / 14	95
2009 Minnesota	342	249 / ?	68 / 60	25 / 21	124
2010 Arizona	322	223 / 178 (80%)	78 / 74 (95%)	21 / 18 (86%)	133
2011 California	367	266 / ?	77 / 73 (95%)	24 / 17 (71%)	142
2012 Connecticut	449	327 / 249 (76%)	85 / 78 (92%)	35 / 30 (86%)	166