

2 April 2020

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing today to give you an update about the plans for the November 2020 Annual Meeting in Boston, Massachusetts. We continue to monitor the outbreak and its implications for the meeting, remaining in communication with our concurrent meeting partner, AAR, as well as civic leaders in Boston, peer learned societies, and industry professionals about the constantly changing nature of this crisis. As you are aware, there is still a tremendous amount of uncertainty at the moment.

In light of uncertainty and contradictory projections, we are doing everything we can to plan for as many contingencies as possible. **Presently, we are still planning to have the meeting in Boston in November.** Program unit chairs should continue to evaluate proposals and create sessions. Members with accepted proposals should continue to work on those papers in anticipation of presenting them.

At the same time, we are exploring every available option should holding an in-person meeting prove impossible or dangerous. These plans would involve virtual meeting components, and we are evaluating various ways to make them work effectively for you. If a contingency plan becomes necessary, we will communicate with members about how we will put it into action.

Registration typically begins in early April. We are postponing the opening of registration until early May, and that date may be adjusted as necessary. We will stay in communication with you about this on the SBL home page and with emails and twitter.

We are also deeply aware that this is not just about SBL. We hold this meeting with AAR, and both SBL and AAR have affiliates that meet with us and depend upon us. Because of this, the meeting is a rich opportunity for intellectual and interpersonal experiences. In addition, publishers look to the meeting as a critical time to exhibit, work with authors, and develop new works that serve your research and professional development. We are factoring all these relationships and responsibilities into our decision making.

These decisions also carry complicated and significant financial implications, and leadership and staff act as fiduciaries on behalf of every member. We have developed strong working relationships with cities, hotels, and convention and visitors bureaus. We expect these will serve us well as we navigate this challenge with and for you.

Foremost, however, is your safety and well-being. We know this is a time of tremendous upheaval in your professional and personal life. SBL has created an [Online Teaching Resources](#) page that we will update and expand, and SBL will include links to other resources in our newsletters and twitter feed. Especially, as we navigate these challenging times together, we hope that you stay safe and stay healthy.

Sincerely,



John F. Kutsko