Annual Meetings 2021

SBL

San Antonio, TX November 20–23

Instructions and Information for Virtual Session Presiders
revised 4 Nov 2021

Platform and Format for Session

While the meeting platform for the app and online planner is EventPilot, the virtual sessions themselves are done through Zoom. By default, sessions will be meetings (allowing all participants/attendees access to mic and video) unless a webinar has specifically been requested by the program unit chairs. Webinars are noted in the app/meeting platform as a “Webinar” in the Online filter, while meetings are simply listed as “Virtual.”

Joining the Session as the Presider

72–48 hours before the start of the session, you will receive and email with some platform-specific information about your participation in the session. This email will come from alerts@ativsoftware.com, so you may wish to add this email address to your email account’s accepted senders list to be sure it does not go to a junk mail folder. The link in the email is unique to you and your role; **please to not forward or give it to anyone else**. Ten minutes before the start of the session, you will be able to click the link and join. Once you join the session, the technical assistant will promote you to the role of co-host. Please be sure to join the session using the emailed link rather than from the session listing in the app/desktop planner, as this is what will allow you to join the session with elevated privileges.

Role Differences (e.g., Host, Co-host, Participant)

Hosts have elevated privileges in the platform, including the ability to change settings and end meetings. The technical assistant will be the session’s host and will make you a co-host at the start of the meeting. Participants can also be made co-hosts by the technical assistant so that they have the ability to share their screen.

Gathering in Session Shortly before Start Time

Ten minutes prior to the start of the meeting, listed participants can join using the link in the email. This is a good time to make sure everyone’s equipment is working properly and that everyone is familiar with the basic schedule. Attendees will be able to join the session around two minutes before the scheduled start time. Due to the fact that the platform is using the same Zoom accounts throughout the meeting, we are not able to schedule test runs for sessions.

Responsibilities during Session

As a presider, your main responsibilities are to make sure that the session starts on time, to see that presenters keep to their allotted time, and to moderate discussion periods. All participants and attendees are expected to engage each other respectfully and professionally, following in particular the SBL Professional Conduct Policy. It is your particular responsibility to intervene if someone's behavior does not meet these standards.

Technical Assistance.

A technical assistant will be present during of the session. This person will be able to assist participants and attendees, including with functions like screen sharing. If you are experiencing a problem, you can ask the technical assistant for help. If you have an issue that needs to be addressed before the session, please contact program@sbl-site.org.

Questions from Attendees

In meetings, you can ask people to use the virtual "raise hand" feature. This will move them to the top of the participants list. You can then call on them, ask them to unmute themselves, and give them the floor to ask the question. If you prefer, you can also use the chat function as a way for attendees to submit question during presentations.

Session Chat

For meetings, chat may be enabled or disabled at your discretion. The chat can be set to allow attendees to chat with the hosts only or with everyone publicly. Private chat messages cannot be enabled. Alternatively, the technical assistant can disable chat by choosing the setting of allowing attendees to chat with "no one." If chat is enabled, care must be taken that it does not become a distraction for the participants. If it does become a distraction, the chat should be disabled. For webinar, we strongly recommend disabling attendee chat by setting the "attendee can chat with" option to "no one" so that it does not create confusion with the Q&A function.

Unruly or Abusive Behavior in Session

If someone is behaving inappropriately, muting their microphone, asking the person to stop, and reminding them of why their behavior is inappropriate will cause the person to stop in most cases. If someone persists in that behavior, or if the behavior is serious enough to warrant immediate ejection from the session, you or the tech assistant can remove them from the session by finding their name in the Participant area, clicking More, and then Remove. An attendee that is removed from a session will not be able to rejoin the session. Violations of the Professional Conduct Policy, especially anything serious enough to warrant ejection from a session, should be reported to the SBL Executive Director or chair of the Professional Conduct Committee.

If a Presenter Does not Show for the Session

Unfortunately, no-shows are a part of every conference. If a presenter does not show up for the session, it is appropriate to skip the next scheduled presentation. If the presenter joins late, you can return to that presentation. If the presenter never shows up, you can either extend discussion time for the other presentations or end the session early.

Ending the Session

When the session reaches its end time (or if you decide to end early), please let the technical assistant know that you are ready to end the session. The technical assistant will be able to do so for all attendees and participants. There is a 15-minute buffer period after the session's scheduled end time during which the session can continue running. At the end of that 15-minute period, the session will end automatically. Because of these hard limits, it is particularly important to keep the session running as scheduled.

Time Zone for App/Meeting Platform

All listed times are in US Central Standard (UTC−06:00).

More Questions

Before the session, please write to programs@sbl-site.org. During the session, you should ask the technical assistant for help.

Guidelines for Session Presiders (adapted from the Program Unit Chair Handbook):

The following guidelines are intended to help those who are moderating sessions encourage a professional and respectful environment.

Before the Session:

1. Only listed participants and the teach assistant will be able to join the session at this time.
2. Work with the technical assistant to ensure that all participants have their camera and microphone enabled. It is also a good idea to encourage presenters to queue up any presentations documents and ask them to let the technical assistant know that they plan to do a screen share.

Beginning of the Session:

1. Log into the session ten minutes prior to the scheduled start time using the link emailed to you from alerts@ativsoftware.com.
2. Welcome the attendees to the session.
3. Be sure to mention the name of the program unit(s) sponsoring the session and any theme that the session might have.
4. Remind attendees that all are expected to behave in a professional manner during in the session, in accordance with the SBL Professional Conduct Policy.

Presentations:

1. Address. Refer to all panelists equally. Studies show that it is more common for women to be referred to by their first names even when they have a professional title. Demonstrating respect, you should confirm ahead of the session how panelists would like to be introduced. We recommend having you announce the first name and last name, so as to avoid using titles that some presenters/respondents might not have.
2. Microphones. It is a good idea to remind presenters who do not have the floor as well as attendees in a meeting to keep themselves muted unless/until they are called on. If anyone’s microphone is making noise during a presentation, you (or the technical assistant) should mute that person.
3. Time. Managing time is critical so that each person in the session or on the panel has an equal opportunity to present. Before the session, reiterate the expectation for each

presentation’s length. We recommend that you provide a five-minute warning, a one-minute warning, and a “time is up” to the presenter. Unfortunately, there is no easy way to do this in Zoom via a tone or other auditory signal. Signals can be sent via a private message in the session chat. If a speaker is running over, it may be necessary to announce using your microphone that time is up.

Discussion:

1. Try to allow for a substantial question and answer period, either as defined in the program listing or as the session allows if a discussion period is not expressly defined. Discussions can take place following each individual presentation or in a block after all presentations have concluded.
2. During start of discussion, remind the attendees asking questions to avoid jargon, speak briefly (ideally no more than 60 seconds), and ask a question.
3. To ensure parity, please be mindful of who is asking questions. Research shows that when women or gender non-conforming people are called on first, there tends to be more gender balance among subsequent questioners.