NWSA Constituency Group Chair Leadership

NWM

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION

Caucuses

Caucuses focus on groups that are under-represented within society or NWSA

Aging and Ageism
Community College
Feminist Mothering
Girls and Girls' Studies
Graduate Student
Indigenous Peoples
Jewish
Lesbian
North American Asian Feminist Collective
Queer and Trans People of Color
South Asian Feminist
Trans/Gender Variant
Transnational Feminisms
Undergraduate Student
Women of Color

Interest Groups

Interest groups focus on areas of scholarly inquiry.

Animal Studies/Animal Ethics
Asexuality Studies
Confronting Campus Sexual Assault
Contingent Faculty
Disabilities Studies
Distance Education
Early Modern Women
Fat Studies
Feminism and Activism
Feminist Masculinities
Feminist Media Studies
Feminist Pedagogy
Feminist Spirituality
Feminists for Justice In/For Palestine
Law and Public Policy
Performance Studies
Publishing Feminisms
Reproductive Justice
Third Wave Feminisms
Gender, Women's, and Feminist
   Studies (GWFS) PhD

Task Forces

Task Forces focus on an issue relevant to NWSA that can be addressed through action.

Anti White Supremacy
International
Librarians
Science and Technology
Social Justice Education

These two groups focus roles that are vital to the NWSA mission.

Program Administration & Development
Women's Centers

NWSA Constituency Group Chair Leadership

Constituency groups play an important role in the organization by connecting scholars with the same research interests or backgrounds, build relationships, strengthen networks within the field of women's studies throughout the year and, at the annual conference, showcase scholarship through sessions. Constituency group leadership can also be a step toward other types of organizational leadership, from serving on a book prize committee to being elected to a seat on the NWSA Governing Council.

Section VII of the NWSA Bylaws states:

NWSA offers a range of constituent group opportunities to its members in order to advance its mission, the field, and to foster paths to leadership, including but not limited to:

- **Caucus:** Caucuses focus on groups that are under-represented within the NWSA or society.

- **Program Administration and Development and Women's Centers:** These two groups focus on particular roles within Women's Studies.

- **Task Forces:** Task Forces focus on an issue relevant to NWSA that can be addressed through action.

- **Interest Groups:** Interest groups focus on areas of scholarly inquiry.

This document provides an orientation to serving as chair, including nuts and bolts of accessing the online tools as well as tips from established chairs. Note, however, that every group and chair is unique. While we hope you can benefit from others' successful strategies, we also recognize that you need to find activities that work for you and your constituents.

Leadership

Constituency groups can engage in a range of activities, from holding business meetings to organizing sponsored sessions, or networking through the year via email or social media. Chairs should assess which activities best fit the current size of their group and availability of volunteers to manage the processes. For some groups, especially those newly formed or rebuilding, it may make the most sense to focus on organizing an effective business meeting. For others who might have volunteers with time and willingness to take on tasks, it may make sense to set up subcommittees. Groups can be successful choosing to focus on a single activity and adding others (or not) as time and volunteer resources allow.

Each group has an elected chair of record who is elected for a two year term. Groups either hold their elections in odd years or even years (see staggered schedule and elections materials) through an online election organized by the national office in September.

Working together with the Chair of Record, groups can organize leadership structures which meet their needs. Many groups have co-chairs and committee structures to organize their activities and promote scholarship and membership in their group.

Conference Activities

Business Meetings
Constituency groups meet once annually at the conference. A typical agenda might include discussing the group's scholarly focus, sharing professional opportunities, and planning sessions for the following year's conference. Many groups find the networking opportunities at the business meeting a valuable resource and not all decide to submit sessions.

Sponsored Sessions
Groups can submit a sponsored session to the conference. All sessions must follow the guidelines in the CFP by the deadline. All sessions are then reviewed as a part of the review process and are not guaranteed acceptance. Sponsored sessions are a specific session type in the online submission system—please review the CFP for submission instructions. Some groups solicit individual abstracts from among their members to create a sponsored sessions. Please see a tip sheet on page 4.

Other Sessions
Some groups organize and submit several sessions as a group and co-sponsor sessions with other groups.

Other Conference Activities

Constituency Group Reception
This reception is open to all attendees and provides an opportunity for constituency groups to recruit new members and network.

Constituency Chair Breakfast
This breakfast for group chairs and co-chairs to network and plan collaborations

Membership Assembly
All members are invited to attend the Membership Assembly. Members can learn about the state of the organization, discuss recommendations in support of the NWSA mission, and talk with NWSA leaders. NWSA members will vote on recommendations and resolutions online electronically after the conference if any are submitted. This change, adopted by the Governing Council in June 2015, will promote democracy in the association and allow for increased member involvement.

Planning for Future Conferences

In most years, the conference program book will include an ad with the following year's conference theme and subtheme so that conversations about planning sessions can begin. The complete call for proposals and submission site opens in mid January. Watch your emails and **www.nwsa.org** for exact dates and details.

Tips for Soliciting Proposals
for Sponsored Sessions

Some groups create a separate Call for Abstracts that mirrors the conference theme and is specific to the interests of the constituency group. In most years, the theme and subthemes for the next year appear in an ad in the current year's program book. The full call is released in January.

☐ Create an abstract review process and chairs decide which abstracts will be included in proposals to NWSA.

☐ Create a deadline that gives you enough time to review the proposals and submit the panels prior to the NWSA submission deadline.

☐ Keep submitters informed about the process. Encourage submitters you do not select to submit with the group to submit to the general conference directly.

☐ Send several reminders and keep messages short and direct. Deadline reminders are often more effective than the initial message.

☐ All sessions must be submitted by the submission deadline using the online system.

Doublecheck:

☐ If you are the session organizer and you plan to present on the session, be sure to add yourself as a presenter at the time of submission.

☐ Use your entire word count to make your best case.

☐ If you are requesting an LCD projector, be sure to request AV and complete the AV rationale. Be specific about how visuals will enhance your presentation. Proposals without AV rationales will not be considered for equipment.

☐ Keep in mind: Session rooms will not be internet equipped. If you collect abstracts and they mention internet-based applications, like prezi or youtube, please let them know.

☐ Did you receive a confirmation email? If not, email the office at nwsaoffice@nwsa.org on the day you submitted the proposal.

Conference Planning Timeline

Conference Activity	Timeline
Launch of submission system	Early January, 2018
Deadline to submit proposals	Febuary 21, 2018
Proposal review process	March, 2018
Accept/Decline notifications	**May 1**
Period to Review Schedule All submitters should review the following for accuracy: ▪ Are the presenters listed for you orrect? ▪ Are the affiliations correct?	Mid June - July 15

Requests: Review the conference schedule by July 15 and submit any scheduling requests by using the online firm provided. Scheduling requests are not guaranteed. Our ability to accommodate changes is limited, due to the complexity of the conference schedule.

Membership

NWSA members can join/renew constituency groups at the time they join/renew their individual membership to the organization. Members can also log in at a later date to join/renew their constituency group membership.

All memberships run on a calendar year from January to December. Constituency group memberships, like NWSA individual memberships, expire on 12/31.

All groups are required to maintain a minimum of 25 members (approximately 1 – 2% of total NWSA membership) You can download your current roster using the online tools below. If you would like the roster with your expired group members, please email **patti.provance@nwsa.org**

Chairs

Constituency group chairs/co-chairs typically have the following responsibilities.

- Communicate with group members via email and social media
- Organize and submit sessions to the conference related to their subject area
- Plan the constituency group business meeting
- Communicate with the national office

Chairs are required to maintain their membership to NWSA and the constituency group during their term as chair.

Accessing Online Tools

Using the online tools the Constituency Group Chair and designees are able to:

1. Email the current group's membership

2. Download the roster

3. Create and manage the group's web page via NWSA.org, if useful

4. Upload files, especially useful for sharing documents with future group leaders

To access the tools you must be a current member of both NWSA and the member group and follow the directions below. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Patti Provance.

Access online tools

Log into **www.nwsa.org** and choose "My Caucuses" and click the group you chair. You will now see a screen with the following links:

- Download Roster
- Send Email Notice
- Manage Web Pages
- Manage File Uploads

Clicking the tools will bring you to the page to complete all of these tasks. All of the tools are user friendly, largely self explanatory, with an interface that resembles Microsoft office commands. These tools work best using Internet Explorer as your browser.

Note: Chairs can download the current member roster. If you would like the roster with your expired group members, please email **patti.provance@nwsa.org**

Technical Assistance

National Office staff can assist with many problems or questions that may arise when you use these tools. If you have a "How to" question, please give us a call at (410) 528-0355. If you have received an error message, please send an email to patti.provance@nwsa.org with a screen shot or the exact wording of the error. We will then need to pass that message onto our vendor who manages the site and we will email you as soon as we have a resolution to the problem. Sometimes this may take a few days.

Communications Policy

All communications must adhere to the guidelines stated in NWSA's Code of Ethics, listed below. Chairs have the responsibility for setting the example in following the policies in their communications.

Electronic Communication

The following guidelines should be followed when engaging in electronic communication:

- NWSA electronic should be used for NWSA-related business only.

- Do not send sexually explicit, offensive, demeaning, insulting or intimidating e-communications, ethnic or racial slurs, or anything that harasses or disparages others.

- No electronic mail may be sent that is abusive or threatens the safety of a person or persons.

- Do not send messages to people who don't need to receive them.

- Be thoughtful about clipping and pasting others' messages in those you send.

- Do not forward e-mail sent to you to others without the original author's permission.

- If you receive a message sent to a list of people, do not respond needlessly to the entire list.

- Use a professional tone in your messages.

- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Your "joke" could be misunderstood.

Please note that while the Code of Ethics refers to list-serves, all communications with constituency groups should follow the Code of Ethics and be related to NWSA business only, regardless of the communication tool (email, web).

Examples of Appropriate Usage

Conference related business including:

- Sharing information to create and submit panels prior to conference, or promoting sessions once the schedule has been released

- Coordinating the group's business meeting and agenda

- Coordinating networking and socializing opportunities

Ongoing opportunities that promote and expand scholarship:

- Upcoming cfp's for other conferences, journals

- Coordinating articles or proposals for other conferences

Elections schedule

The bylaws include information about national elections for the chair of record for all constituency groups. Each spring, the national office will send information about elections. Below is the staggered election schedule.

2018 (even year elections)

Caucuses

- Aging and Ageism Caucus
- Community College Caucus
- Girls & Girls Studies Caucus
- Indigenous Peoples Caucus
- Jewish Caucus
- North American Asian Feminist Collective Caucus
- Undergraduate Caucus

Interest Groups

- Animal Studies/Animal Ethics Interest Group
- Asexuality Interest Group
- Confronting Campus Sexual Assault Interest Group
- Early Modern Women Interest Group
- Fat Studies Interest Group
- Feminists for Justice In/For Palestine
- Feminist Media Studies Interest Group
- Feminist Pedagogy Interest Group
- Law and Public Policy Interest Group
- Performance Studies Interest Group
- Publishing Feminisms Interest Group
- Reproductive Justice Interest Group

Task Forces

- Librarians Task Force
- Science and Technology Task Force

Program Administrators and Directors

2019 (odd year elections)

Caucuses

- Feminist Mothering Caucus
- Trans/Gender Variant Caucus
- Graduate Student Caucus
- Transnational Feminisms Caucus
- Lesbian Caucus
- Women of Color Caucus
- South Asian Feminist Caucus

Interest Groups

- Contingent Faculty Interest Group
- Feminist Masculinities Interest Group
- Disability Studies Interest Group
- Feminist Spirituality Interest Group
- Distance Education Interest Group
- Third Wave Feminisms Interest Group
- Feminism and Activism Interest Group
- Women's/Gender/Feminist PhD and Doctoral Students Interest Group

Task Forces

- Anti White Supremacy Task Force
- Social Justice Education Task Force
- International Task Force

Women's Centers