

5th Graduate Student Conference

Innsbruck, Austria, 3 – 5 July 2014

The role of Panel Chairs and Discussants

How to be a Panel Chair

Rainbow Murray, experienced Section Chair and former member of the ECPR's Graduate Student Network, gives her advice on how to get the most out of chairing a Panel at the Graduate Conference.

- There is no need to introduce yourself or anyone else at length, unless they are a special invited guest from outside academia. At most, say people's names and institutional affiliations. Let them introduce their Papers themselves.
- Start the Panel on time wherever possible.
- Let the Paper-givers speak in the order of the programme unless they request differently – for technical reasons, for example.
- Keep each Paper-giver to time. This is the most important part of the role of Chair. Allow the final third of the session for questions and divide the remaining time evenly between the number of panellists. If one person goes over, they are eating directly out of the time of the other panellists, and that isn't fair. Give people a subtle warning when they are close to time (a raised eyebrow may suffice, otherwise passing them a piece of paper saying '2 minutes' in big letters will do the trick). Pass them another note saying 'please conclude' or similar once they are out of time. If they don't stop, you will need to be bold and ask them out loud to wrap up. Even if they are much more senior than you, it is your professional obligation as well as theirs to keep to time, and people will respect you more for being strict than being weak.
- Once all Papers have been given, take questions from the audience. If there are lots of questions, try to avoid asking any yourself, but try to think of some just in case the audience take a while to warm up (or go silent very quickly).

- If any of the audience goes off on a lengthy tangent, you may need to interrupt them to refocus the discussion.
- Make sure the session finishes on time. People want their cup of coffee/toilet break, etc and they can always continue the debate over coffee if they care that much.
- Always end the session by inviting the audience to thank the presenters (round of applause).

How to be a Discussant

As a Discussant, you serve two different needs.

Your first and most important responsibility is to help the audience understand the Papers better. You should have read the Papers carefully, taken time to understand their contributions, strengths and weaknesses, and what the audience needs to know about them.

Your second responsibility is to the authors.

What are your reactions to the Papers and why? What can the authors do to improve the Paper? Learning how to read other Papers with the critical eye of a good Discussant will help you to learn how to write Papers that appeal to the profession.

- Summarise briefly the Paper's main message and its contribution.
- Provide an assessment of the Paper: does it make its case convincingly?
- Suggest constructive ways to improve the Paper.
- Highlight the relevance of the Paper to academia and society.
- Stimulate conversation among the audience by posing questions for discussion.

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Guidelines and deadlines

Conference format

The academic programme will be organised in Sections and Panels, with each Section Chair organising a variety of Panels in a given field. The programme will be broad, with Sections covering all main areas of political science, political theory, international relations and European studies.

The Graduate Student Conference is open to graduate students only: those who have a Master's degree, who are studying for a PhD, or who hold junior postdoctoral positions.

There is a two-stage selection process for proposals.

Stage 1 Call for Sections

1 July 2013 – 27 September 2013

Stage 2 Call for full Panels and individual Papers

28 October 2013 – 20 January 2014

Individuals may perform each conference function (Section Chair, Panel Chair, Discussant, Paper giver) **only once** within the academic programme and Panel Chair(s) may not present a Paper in the same Panel that they are Chairing.

Individuals may propose more than one Panel or Paper, but only one can be accepted.

Stage 1 Call for Sections

1 July 2013 – 27 September 2013

Only graduate students from full ECPR member institutions may organise a Section. Co-Chairs may come from Associate or non-member institutions; check your institution's [membership status](#). Only the proposed Section Chair can submit a Section proposal.

All Section proposals must be submitted online through MyECPR. The proposer must, therefore, have a [MyECPR account](#).

If necessary, two people will be appointed to Chair each Section. Additional Section Chairs may be appointed

if there is an exceptional number of Panel and Paper proposals for that Section.

All proposals to organise Sections should be submitted online by 27 September 2013. Sections will be selected by the Academic Convenors by 28 October 2013. The exact size of each Section (the number of Panels awarded) is at the discretion of the Academic Convenors, whose decision is final.

When judging Section proposals for acceptance, the Academic Convenors use the following criteria:

- a. Quality of proposal
- b. Participation potential

Proposers will be emailed the decision on their Section submission by 4 November 2013. If you have not heard by this date, contact foley@ecpr.eu as soon as possible.

Any queries regarding the academic content of the proposed Section should be addressed to the Academic Convenors via foley@ecpr.eu before the 27 September 2013 deadline.

Section proposers please note In addition to Panels included in your Stage 1 Section proposal you will receive Panels with Papers and individual Paper proposals to your Section as part of Stage 2. These should be evaluated equally alongside any already proposed by the Section Chairs. Individual Papers should be evaluated equally and, if accepted, will be allocated to a Panel the Section Chair feels most appropriate.

Aspiring Chairs should be aware that submitting a proposal does not guarantee inclusion in the programme. After evaluation by the Academic Convenors, Sections may be declined or approved with a reduced number of Panels; therefore even if a Panel is solicited and/or accepted for inclusion in a Section proposal, it is not guaranteed inclusion in the final programme, even if the Section itself is accepted. **You will also need to make a formal proposal via the website, as detailed in Stage 2.**

Your Section proposal requires

- Proposed Section Chair and Co-Chair to have a MyECPR account
- Email address for the Co-Chair, as registered in their MyECPR account
- Suggested subject area, selected from the drop-down list (see Appendix 1)
- Section title
- Abstract of no more than 500 words, in English, which summarises the key aims and objectives of the Section and includes ideas for Panels and Papers

Stage 2 Call for Panels and individual Papers

28 October 2013 – 20 January 2014

The second stage is open to Graduate students from ECPR member and non-member institutions, but all participants must have a [MyECPR account](#) because proposals are submitted online. Only the proposed Panel Chair can submit a Panel. At Stage 2 you can:

- Propose a Panel including 3 – 5 Papers
- Propose individual Papers to a particular Section

You will be asked to select the Section for which your Panel or Paper is being considered, and select 3 – 8 keywords, which will help with the organisation of the academic programme.

You can submit proposals to more than one Section but even if you are successful, you will only be selected to Chair one Panel and to present one Paper.

Panel and Paper Selection

From 1 December 2013, Section Chairs and Academic Convenors will be able to view proposed Panels. Section Chairs will then accept and decline Panels and Papers proposed to their Section. They then have until 21 February 2014 to finalise Sections via MyECPR.

When assessing what to accept onto a Panel, Section Chairs should use the following criteria:

- a. Quality of proposal
- b. Fit with Section theme
- c. Whether a Panel chaired by the same person has already been accepted

From 22 February the Academic Convenors will review the recommendations of Section Chairs and, depending on the number and topics of Panels submitted, may decide to change Section compositions. This will be complete by 31 March 2014. Central Services will notify Section and Panel Chairs of the Academic Convenors' decision by email, shortly after the deadline.

Panel Co-Chairs and Paper Co-Authors who do not intend to attend the conference should inform Central Services by 2 June 2014 to ensure their names appear in the conference programme.

Please email afoley@ecpr.eu with any scheduling requests as soon as possible. Deadline for receipt is 14 April 2014. We will make every effort to accommodate your requests, but cannot guarantee their inclusion.

To propose a Panel comprising 3 – 5 Papers, you will need

- Name of the Section to which you want to propose a Panel (select from drop-down list)
- Panel title
- Panel abstract of no more than 300 words, in English, which summarises the key aims and objectives of the Panel
- 3 – 8 keywords (from drop-down list)
- Name of the Co-Chair (if you have one), and their email address as registered in their MyECPR account
- Name of the Discussant (if you have one), and their email address, as registered in their MyECPR account
- Details of all 3 – 5 Papers:
 - ◆ Paper title
 - ◆ Abstract for each Paper of no more than 150 words, in English, which summarise the key aims and objectives of the Paper
 - ◆ 3 – 8 keywords (from drop-down list)
 - ◆ Presenter name and email address, as registered in their MyECPR account
 - ◆ Name of up to four Co-Authors (if applicable), and their email addresses, as registered in their MyECPR account

To propose a Paper, you will need

- Name of the Section to which you wish to propose your Paper (select from the drop-down list)
- Paper title
- Paper Co-Author (if you have one), along with their email address, as registered in their MyECPR account
- Paper abstract of no more than 150 words, in English, which summarises the Paper's key aims and objectives
- Name of your Paper Co-author (if you have one), along with their email address, as registered in their MyECPR account
- 3 – 8 keywords (from drop-down list)

Please note Only a Paper Author can submit a Paper proposal. By proposing a Paper you automatically become its presenter. An individual may propose more than one Paper but only one can be accepted.

Conference format

Academic programme

The academic programme will be finalised by the Academic Convenors and ECPR Academic Director after the deadline for Panel and Paper proposals. They may, depending on the number and topics of Panels and Papers proposed on a standalone basis, allocate those Panels and Papers to Sections and Panels where space permits. Section Chairs may therefore be asked to accommodate new Panels in their Sections and Panel Chairs to accommodate extra Papers within their Panels.

The academic programme will be available on this website by 24 March 2014, and the full timetable by 1 May 2014.

Amendments to Section/Panel/Paper information (titles/abstracts; names of Panel Chairs/Discussants) can be sent to afoley@ecpr.eu between 31 March and 12 May 2014 for inclusion in the printed conference programme.

Amendments received after 12 May 2014 will not appear in the printed programme and will be amended in the online version and the errata sheet only.

Please note that individuals may perform each of the conference functions (Section Chair, Panel Chair, Discussant, Paper giver) **only once** within the academic programme.

Paper upload

Accepted Papers may be uploaded onto this website via MyECPR from 1 May 2014. All Paper givers will be sent instructions on how to do so.

There is no requirement for Papers to be uploaded; however, they should be circulated to all Panel members at least two weeks before the start of the conference. Please let us know if you **do not** wish your Paper to be available on the website after the conference.

Registration

You can register online from 24 March 2014 at a special Early Bird rate, which applies until 5 May 2014. Further details, including registration fees and cancellation policy, will be available in due course.

Participants taking part in any academic capacity must register before 29 June 2014 to be included in the printed programme.

Conference timetable

Panels are scheduled in seven time slots commencing at 13:00 on Thursday 3 July and closing at 14:00 on Saturday 5 July. Participants should ensure they are available for ALL seven time slots. The Schedule of Activities will be added in due course.

Further information

Please contact Anna Foley, afoley@ecpr.eu, with questions about any aspect of the organisation of your Section or Panel.

The ECPR website will be updated regularly with information about the academic and social programmes, registration, accommodation, etc. We will also make regular announcements in ECPR e-bulletins, so please ensure you are subscribed to the **Conferences and Events** mailing list via MyECPR.

Key dates and deadlines

2013

1 July	Call for Sections
27 September	Deadline for Section proposals
28 October	Academic Convenors confirm acceptance of Sections Call for Panel proposals to include Papers and individual Paper proposals to sections
1 December	Access given to Section Chairs and Academic Convenors to view Panel and Paper proposals

2014

20 January	Deadline for Panel and Paper proposals
21 January	Access given to Section Chairs and Academic Convenors to accept/decline Panel and Paper proposals
21 February	Deadline for Section Chairs to accept/decline Panel and Paper proposals
22 February	Academic Convenors review Sections
24 March	Online registration begins Academic Convenors confirm final Section compositions
31 March	Academic Programme available at www.ecpr.eu
1 April	Papers can be uploaded from this date
14 April	Deadline for scheduling requests
5 May	Deadline for Early Bird registration
12 May	Deadline for sending amendments to titles, abstracts, Chairs and Discussants to afoley@ecpr.eu
2 June	Deadline for receipt of programme amendments Deadline for Co-Authors who are not attending to inform afoley@ecpr.eu
26 June	Deadline for registration

Appendix 1

Suggested subject areas

- 1. Governance and Leadership**
Panels focusing on political leadership and cabinet government
- 2. Area Studies**
Panels focusing on specific regions (African, Asian, Latin American studies, the Middle East, etc)
- 3. Comparative Politics**
(including African, Asian, American, European & Latin American Politics) – comparative papers within or across area studies, on any aspect of the political system
- 4. Critical Approaches**
Panels focusing on critical theory, Marxism, feminism, post-structuralism, post-modernism, and other similar approaches
- 5. Democracy and Democratisation**
Theoretical and empirical papers on democracy (and the quality of democracy) and the process of democratisation
- 6. Development Studies**
Papers on the formation of political systems and the political aspects of economic development
- 7. Electoral Politics**
Papers on electoral systems and reforms at whichever level of government
- 8. Environmental Politics**
Panels focusing on green politics, green public policy and green parties
- 9. EU Politics**
Papers on EU integration, institutionalisation, governance, widening, deepening, etc
- 10. Foreign Policy Analysis**
Panels on foreign policy and foreign policy behaviour of nations and institutions in the EU
- 11. Gender Politics**
Papers on the gendered aspect of politics and on gender policy
- 12. Globalisation, Citizenship and Migration**
Papers on the impact of globalisation on migration flows and citizenship policies, at a theoretical and an empirical level
- 13. International Relations**
Theoretical and applied papers in the field of IR
- 14. Law and Politics**
Papers on the relationship between law and politics, and on more substantive issues, such as human rights protection and promotion
- 15. Media and Politics**
Papers on the impact of public opinion and the media on the political process
- 16. Party Politics**
Papers on political parties
- 17. Peace and Conflict Studies**
Papers on processes of conflict resolution and peace-building
- 18. Political Economy**
Theoretical and empirical papers on the governing of the economy
- 19. Political Methodology**
Theoretical and applied papers with a clear methodological drive
- 20. Political Psychology**
Panels addressing the interrelationships between psychological and political processes
- 21. Political Sociology**
Papers on social movements, advocacy coalitions, contentious politics, the social roots of political parties, etc
- 22. Political Theory**
Papers on empirically grounded political theorising and on political philosophy
- 23. Politics and Human Rights**
Panels on the politics of personal integrity rights, cultural, economic and social rights
- 24. Public Administration**
Papers on public administration and various forms of governance
- 25. Public Policy**
All fields of public policy except economic and gender policies
- 26. Regionalism & Federalism**
Papers on micro- (or sub-state) regionalism, decentralisation, devolution and local politics, as well as papers on federalism and intergovernmental relations at a theoretical and empirical level
- 27. Religion & Politics**
The impact of religion on politics, and of politics on religion
- 28. Security Studies**
Papers on security, broadly conceived (military, civilian, energy, environmental, etc)