

# GUIDELINES FOR HOSTING REGIONAL MEETINGS

## PURPOSE

Regional meetings are an essential part of Phi Alpha Theta, with about three dozen meetings held each year. They provide a forum for undergraduate and graduate students to present papers and exchange ideas, while advancing Phi Alpha Theta's fellowship and the historical profession in general.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

A region may encompass a state, a cluster of states, or one portion of a state. The meetings often include the same chapters each year; however, this is not required. We encourage interregional cooperation, so students may make presentations at more than one regional conference.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOST CHAPTER FACULTY ADVISORS:

1. **Volunteer to host a regional meeting.** Each regional conference should select the next year's host and if possible the next several years' hosts. If no chapter volunteers, a Phi Alpha Theta representative will contact potential host chapters.
2. **Notify National Headquarters** that your chapter will host the next year's meeting as early as possible.
3. **Set the date and inform National Headquarters** as soon as possible so that a National Representative can be assigned. The meeting may last a single Saturday morning, one day, or an entire weekend. Please be aware of factors that reduce attendance: e.g., holiday weekends, large historical conferences such as the OAH, other local historical conferences, and spring breaks. We will list your regional on our website.
4. **Obtain support** (administrative and/or financial) of appropriate officials at your campus early. There should be no financial cost to the host chapter. See below ("Determine a registration fee.")
5. **Contact previous hosts** for advice and assistance. National Headquarters can provide names.
6. **Reserve meeting facilities** for the conference early.
7. **Prepare a budget.**

8. **Arrange for meals** with the school's food services. Usually this entails coffee and doughnuts in the morning and a lunch.
9. **Determine a registration** fee that will cover all the chapter's expenses. It should include the cost of the luncheon and refreshments in the morning and facilities charges if appropriate. **A registration fee ensures that the cost of the meeting is not absorbed by the chapter.** National Headquarters will reimburse up to \$100 to defray the expenses of food or meeting room rental – but not speakers' honoraria, cash prizes, travel costs, or postage – upon submission of valid receipts from vendors. We do not encourage speakers' honoraria or cash prizes.
10. **Arrange for a volunteer speaker** to save the cost of an honorarium. Many historians will be glad to give a presentation at no charge. Try your campus first. We are in the early stages of setting up a Speakers Bureau which will be helpful.
11. **Contact the colleges/universities** on the list that National Headquarters provides you, and invite non-member institutions that are considering establishing their own Phi Alpha Theta chapters. Please note that the list of faculty advisors changes frequently. The Chapter Directory at <http://www.phialphatheta.org/chapters.cfm> is as accurate as the information provided to headquarters.
12. **If you receive no response from any of the invited chapters, contact their department chairs** to determine if there has been a change in Faculty Advisor, and **please notify National Headquarters immediately**, so we can update our records.
13. **Include the following in your invitation (you may post this on your website as well):**
  - a. **Time and location** of the regional meeting
  - b. **A map** and a **schedule of events**
  - c. **The Call for Papers including:**
    - i. The deadline for submission (expect tardy responses)
    - ii. The length requirement for papers (10 to 12 double-spaced, typewritten pages to be read in a maximum of 20-25 minutes – or less, if more than three papers are assigned to a panel)
    - iii. Membership requirements (All paper presenters must be Phi Alpha Theta members to be eligible for awards, although non-members may present in special sessions.)
    - iv. The requirement for brief autobiographies to be submitted with papers and used in introducing presenters
14. **Visit our website** [www.phialphatheta.org/regionals.htm](http://www.phialphatheta.org/regionals.htm) **for samples** of the

Call for Papers, letters to participants, judging forms, etc. Additional samples are available upon request from National Headquarters.

15. **Develop a program for the meeting and arrange for its printing.** Ensure both room names and numbers are printed on the program. A suggested program might be:
  - a. **Registration** - collect registration fees; distribute the programs/schedules and name tags with attendees' names and schools
  - b. **Light breakfast** - e.g., coffee, doughnuts, fruit
  - c. **General session** - Welcome, introductions including the National Representative with announcements from headquarters
  - d. **Paper presentation panels** - Often, paper sessions are thematic, with papers on common topics grouped together. Held concurrently or sequentially, panels have three papers per session followed by questions, discussion, and faculty evaluations. Panel chairs may be faculty or students from host or visiting chapters.
  - e. **Luncheon with address by invited speaker** - You do not have to include a luncheon speaker nor should you pay an honorarium for one. Often a speaker is a faculty member at the host institution. Many historians will volunteer to speak for travel expenses only.
  - f. **A meeting with new faculty advisors** - This is a priority, because there is such an enormous advisor turnover. You can make a difference!
  - g. **Student workshops**— Examples: chapter activities, state of the history profession and job market, creating a journal/publication, chapter student officers' challenges/solutions, faculty/student exchange of ideas.
  - h. **Announcements of awards** – The host chapter chooses whether or not to award prizes. Monographs are provided at no cost by National Headquarters to be used as awards. Please announce that paper winners are eligible to present papers at the Phi Alpha Theta Biennial Convention and at numerous historical association conferences. The papers may be considered for possible publication in *The Historian*. Also encourage faculty advisors to submit articles.
16. **Arrange for session rooms, furniture, equipment:**
  - a. Tables for presenters and session chairperson and chairs for 25 attendees (+ or -)
  - b. Podium for presenters/speaker with microphone for meetings and luncheon
  - c. Table skirting

- d. Water and cups for presenters/chairperson
  - e. Protection from audio interference from other rooms
  - f. Audio-visuals: ability to darken room if necessary, A-V capability, A-V equipment
17. **Request free monographs from National Headquarters** to use as prizes several weeks in advance of the meeting as soon as your panels are set up. Define the categories needed (e.g., American, African, Asian History). We provide up to six books at no cost to the chapter, which are sent directly to the student winner by our Book Review Editor.
  18. **Select judges for panels.** NOTE: Faculty advisors should never judge their own chapter members. You may select faculty members who are attending as judges; however, some regionals have professors from non-attending institutions judge submissions. Both content and presentations should be evaluated. Judges are crucial to the efficient operation of regional meetings. Major questions to consider with respect to judging include:
    - a. When is the evaluation being done: before, during, and/or after the meeting?
    - b. What are the instructions for judges? NOTE: Papers should be sent to judges without any indication of the author or institution.
    - c. Out of the region evaluators will remove any possible favoritism.
  19. **Contact the National Headquarters representative**, who will attend at no cost to the host chapter. National representatives make announcements as part of the program. Headquarters reimburses their travel expenses. (Please note, however, that some host chapters may be asked to make these announcements in lieu of a visit from a National Representative.)
  20. **Arrange for a contact person and phone for the day of the meeting** to take calls about delays and problems or to give directions to the meeting building.
  21. **Supply directions, maps, and clear signage on your campus** to the meeting.
  22. **Select a photographer** to provide group shots and names. Send pictures to National Headquarters for possible use in our newsletter.
  23. **Select a host chapter for the next year(s)! This is very important.**
  24. **Submit a report to National Headquarters** using the supplied form, accompanied by a meeting program, photos for possible publication in the News Letter, and the name of the host chapter(s) for the next regional meeting(s). You may send the report and program as email attachments.
  25. **Submit receipts** from food-service vendors if you require reimbursement (up to \$100), and indicate to whom the check should be payable.