



## Committee on Conference Connections Procedures Manual

### 1. Summary of Committee

The goal of the Conference Connections program is to provide structured opportunities for student members to meet more senior members of AAAL during the annual conference. The program was established in 2018 to address the professional development needs and interests of student members of AAAL as identified by two years of information-gathering on the part of the AAAL Graduate Student Council and Executive Committee (EC).

### 2. General Committee Policies

- See 3 to 6 below.

### 3. Committee Purpose and Membership

#### a. Purpose

The purpose of the Conference Connections (CC) Standing Committee is to coordinate the program, with support from the AAAL administrative office and leadership, including:

- Establishment of program goals and expectations for participants;
- Promotion and advertisement of the program to both student and senior members of AAAL;
- Mentee and mentor registration processes;
- Mentee and mentor pairings and introductions;
- Annual evaluation of mentee and mentor experiences;
- Annual reporting of participation rates, participant evaluations, and recommendations for program procedures to the AAAL Executive Committee.

#### b. Define who serves on the Committee

The committee is composed of no more than 10 members, including a committee chair. Membership will include at least 2 graduate student representatives (one of whom should be a member of the AAAL Graduate Student Council). The committee chair is appointed for a 2-year term by the AAAL President. The chair is typically a senior member of AAAL who has served on the Conference Connections committee for at least one preceding year. Members are appointed in consultation with the committee chair for a term of 3 years for faculty members and 2 years for student members (some terms may be shorter in the initial years of the standing committee in order to stagger membership changes). Committee members should represent a broad range of sub-disciplinary, methodological and epistemological backgrounds in order to facilitate appropriate pairings across all topical strands represented at the annual conference.



4. Rules Regarding Conference Connections and the responsibilities of the Chair of the Committee
  - a. CC Participants

Conference Connections is an initiative that seeks to pair a more senior member of AAAL, who serves as a "mentor", with a student (the "mentee") during the conference.

The pairing will take the form of an informal 30-minute meeting.

The mentees can select one of two options:

**Option 1 (General mentoring support):** This option is for students who are in earlier stages of their scholarly development; they can generally articulate their areas of interest, but may not yet have a defined research trajectory. Some topics for discussion could include navigating AAAL and the field of applied linguistics in general, writing successful conference and/or research proposals, becoming involved in service as a student, managing work/life balance, and more.

**Option 2 (Research and advanced professional development):** This option is for graduate students/candidates who are in the later stages of their scholarly development; they have a clearly defined research trajectory and can articulate specifically what sort of interests and feedback they are looking to explore with their mentors. Some topics for discussion could include becoming an independent and primary researcher/investigator, turning a presentation into a journal article, developing a dissertation chapter, securing funding for research and external projects, or applying for jobs/entering the academic job market.

- b. Roles of the CC chair

The CC chair is to:

- work with the AAAL President to decide on the composition of the committee
- coordinate with the AAAL office to
  - disseminate CC registration information
  - obtain mentor and mentee registration information
  - announce pairings after they are done
  - design and administer post CC surveys
  - review the CC event using the survey information and internal feedback from the CC committee to enhance the effectiveness of the event for the next conference.
- distribute mentor-mentee registration information to the rest of the CC committee on a Google excel file to facilitate mentor-mentee pairings



- contact conference strand coordinators (with the assistance of the conference organizer) to identify potential mentors, if specific areas of expertise are needed to optimize mentor-mentee pairings
  - review the CC event using the aforementioned post-conference survey information and invited internal feedback from the CC committee to enhance the effectiveness of the event for the next conference; the review/report is to be submitted to the AAAL leadership in time for the October EC meeting
- c. Who can take part in Conference Connections? What are the requirements in order to serve as a mentor? To be a mentee? Etc.
- Both the mentor and mentee need to register and be present at the conference in order to be eligible for participation in CC.
  - The mentor is a more senior member of AAAL.
  - The mentee is a student in need of professional guidance whose needs fit into the two options (see 4a) described earlier.

## 5. Committee Procedures

- a. How/when are mentors/mentees paired?
- Prospective CC participants (mentors and mentees) complete an online registration form where they are asked to select from two options (see 4a). In addition, they are asked to indicate their date and time availability during the conference. The registration information – collated by the AAAL business office – is then used by the CC committee to pair mentors and mentees.
  - Mentees are not paired with mentors from their own academic institution.
  - Mentees are asked to identify their main research interests in their registration form and to indicate specific mentors they would like to have; these mentors would need to be conference attendees for that given year. Mentees are also asked to search on the online conference program to verify if the individuals they have identified as mentors will be attending the conference that year. (*Note: the CC committee does not guarantee that the mentee will be paired with a specific/selected mentor because such a pairing would depend on the latter's attendance at the conference and their availability.*)
- b. How/when is Conference Connections marketed?
- Starting Fall 2020, CC is to be marketed when conference acceptance notifications are sent out for the upcoming conference. Conference attendees will be asked to indicate their interest in participating in CC – as either a mentor or mentee – when they are notified of their conference acceptance.
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- As part of the marketing strategy, positive testimonials from CC participants from the preceding event will also be featured through AAAL communication platforms (e.g., the AAAL website) to generate buzz for and interest in the CC event.
- c. How does someone apply to serve as a mentor/mentee?
- The individuals complete an online registration form designed by the CC committee that is distributed by the AAAL business office in December.
- d. Who sets up the mentor/mentee applications and how?
- The CC committee is in charge of designing two separate online registration forms: one for mentor participants and another for mentee participants.
  - These registration forms are sent out to the AAAL membership by the AAAL business office in December.

## 6. Timeline

Oct.-Nov.	Committee adjusts procedures based on evaluation of previous year's CC event; Mentee/mentor sign-up forms, announcements, and communication templates are finalized.
Oct.-Nov.	Along with the conference notification email sent out of the AAAL business office, conference attendee will be asked to indicate their interest in participating in CC.
Dec.	Committee coordinates with AAAL business office to send out event announcements containing links to sign-up forms.
Jan.	Committee receives list of registered mentees and mentors; mentee-mentor pairings begin.
Feb.	Mentee-mentor pairings are complete and communicated to AAAL administrative office; AAAL office notifies mentor/mentee pairings on behalf of the committee.
Mar.	AAAL annual conference.
Apr.	Committee distributes mentee and mentor surveys for post-event evaluation
Aug.	Committee prepares annual report for AAAL EC.