AREA CHAIR DUTIES

*Film & History* depends on the dedication and hard work of volunteers to conduct successful conferences. All of us thank you for volunteering to serve as an Area Chair. Your efforts are what make this all happen!

The duties of an Area Chair are as follows:

1. Solicit proposals in your area for the upcoming *Film & History* conference. The *Film & History* website (http://filmandhistory.org) has a template for our Calls for Papers. Please consult it, and follow the format, in order to ensure consistency among the Calls. As you draft your CFP, remember that this is the primary marketing tool for your area. While being clear and professional, remember to frame your Call in such a way as to generate interest and enthusiasm, as well. When your CFP is ready, submit it to Conference Coordinator Cindy Miller for review and approval (cynthia_miller@emerson.edu).

2. Once your CFP has been approved, it will be ready for posting and distribution. All CFPs are posted promptly to our website, and will also be distributed to the following listservs for you (please do not duplicate this distribution; the list managers get very unhappy): h-film, h-pcaaca, screen-l, and our own listserv, FilmandHist-conference. CFPs will also be posted on the UPenn website. As Area Chair, you may identify other venues specific to your area, and distribute your CFP to them, as well as promoting your area with your colleagues at your home institution and elsewhere. Don’t be shy about contacting scholars known for their work in your area, too – they’ll generally be very pleased that you recognized their expertise, and might well take the prompt to participate.

3. As you receive proposals, send prompt acknowledgements! This is very important, not only as a professional courtesy, but also as a deterrent to multiple submissions by the same participant. *Film & History* follows the “One Paper Rule,” meaning that an individual may present only one paper at the conference (excluding special workshops and roundtables, or acting as chair or commentator for another session). If Area Chairs fail to acknowledge proposals promptly, the individuals submitting them are far more likely to submit them to another area, creating significant problems when it comes time for shaping panels and drafting the conference schedule.

4. Evaluate the proposals you receive within NO MORE THAN one week of their arrival. We strongly encourage you to work with individuals whose ideas have merit but whose proposals require more thought or different framing. This approach is particularly helpful to graduate students and scholars whose first language is not English. Maintain intellectual and scholarly standards, always, but offer supportive, collegial guidance and assistance when necessary. Your efforts will set the tone for their conference experience and often will be the
aspect most remembered by the submitter. We want the entire process to be positive and encouraging for everyone. (We also gladly accept proposals for complete panels, but remember that every member must submit an individual abstract.)

5. Please note that we may extend the deadline for papers, but it is never a “given” that this will occur, so encourage all interested individuals to submit as early in the process as possible, and definitely by the posted deadline. As Area Chair, you will have some discretion for accepting late abstracts until your panels are submitted.

6. You will be asked, at several key points, to supply information regarding submissions to your area, so that we may track numbers of participants, and promote accordingly. Please supply this information in a timely fashion (within one week, max.) so that we can provide your area with the best support possible.

7. Each Area Chair will construct, title, and submit the panels for his or her area. By definition, an area should consist of at least three panels, though exceptions are made. There is no upper limit on the number of panels an area can contribute to the conference. In the past, large areas have fielded 15-18 high-quality panels – a contribution worthy of recognition! Area Chairs are also responsible for relaying any scheduling requests from presenters in their area.

8. Area Chairs will provide timely support for participants in their area, responding to questions regarding conference procedures and other concerns that presenters might have. Referrals to Cindy Miller, at cynthia_miller@emerson.edu are always welcome, should your participants have questions or concerns you feel unable to answer. But do remember that you are a representative of the Center and the journal, so please be encouraging to your participants, many of whom will rely on your example and enthusiasm.

9. Attend the conference and chair as many panels in your area as possible, and meet your area’s participants during the conference, as part of building long-term collegial relationships within the organization. If circumstances arise that prevent you from attending the conference, please recommend another scholar who would be willing to take your place.

10. After the conference, send a brief thank-you note to your participants, solicit feedback, and forward any follow-up information to them, regarding submitting their work to the journal, etc. Area Chairs may also want to consider scholarly projects tied to their areas.