Moderator Instructions for AALAS National Meeting

Moderators play an integral role in the success of the National AALAS meeting. Moderators are emissaries for AALAS. They set the tone for the session and help showcase AALAS as a professional organization. A trained Moderator can respond quickly to issues that arise during a session and make important decisions to restore the flow, timing and tone of a session. An adept Moderator can smooth over difficult situations confidently, allowing both audience and speaker participants to feel comfortable and get the most out of the session.

The Program Committee (PC) can facilitate this process by encouraging session leaders to choose their Moderators carefully and ensuring that Moderators are trained properly. The PC can also facilitate this process by ensuring that breaks are scheduled during platform and seminar sessions, which are the most likely sessions to experience time delays. These breaks serve an important function by allowing Moderators to encourage discussion on interesting topics, catch up, or squeeze in a late-show or last minute addition.

Guidelines for Moderators

Before the meeting
Moderators are encouraged to contact (email, phone, pre-session meeting) their respective speakers prior to the National Meeting. By introducing themselves, Moderators can set expectations to ensure timing, speaker order, and flow of the session. Meeting-specific information is typically provided at this time. Moderators should remind speakers to: (1) pre-load their talks at least 24 hours before the session is scheduled, (2) bring a backup copy of their talk, (3) show up in the meeting room at least 20 minutes before their talk, (4) have timed their talks appropriately to finish in the allotted time.

At the meeting
Try to arrive ~ 20 minutes prior to the scheduled session. Introduce yourself to the AV engineer (if one is present), the Facilitator (if one is present) and any speakers who may be present. Show all speakers how to use the podium, how the timer works, what the green/red lights indicate, etc. Ask them how long their talk is and remind them of your desire to keep the program running on schedule. Make sure you know how to pronounce their name.

Check with the AV engineer to see that everyone’s talk has been uploaded. If not, you’ll need to start thinking about alternative plans. Ask the AV engineer about the process for uploading talks. Work with the Facilitator, if one is present, to track down missing speakers and assist them with last minute uploading. Go to the Speaker Ready Room and see if they are present.

Microphones may not be present or work properly in all rooms. As Moderator, you or the Facilitator should check all of the microphones before your session and contact the AV engineer or an AALAS staff member if there are problems.
1. If someone doesn’t show up early for their scheduled talk, make an announcement during the introduction of your session to ascertain whether they are present. Even late comers may have an opportunity to pre-load their talk; direct them to the AV engineer or Facilitator.

2. During your introductory remarks
   a. Thank everyone for coming
   b. Remind them of what session they are attending
   c. If session is being recorded, make announcement to this effect and include the type of session it is (special topic lecture, seminar, panel discussion, or platform session).
   d. Remind them to turn off cell phones, pagers or other electronic devices and taking photos/video is not allowed. This is against AALAS rules and can be distracting to the presenter.
   e. Ask that people who have questions use the microphone. If you tell the audience that this will facilitate everyone being able to hear their question, they will often comply. During the question/discussion period, don’t be shy about reminding people with questions to step to the microphone so that everyone can hear. If everyone cannot hear the question, ask the speaker to repeat the question.
   f. If all your speakers have not previously checked in with you, please review expectations during your introductory remarks, in case they are in the audience, “Talks will be approximately X minutes and questions will occur as time allows, etc.”
   g. Please announce at the beginning and end of the session: Remind attendees evaluations can be completed online in the mobile application. This is the best tool that the National AALAS staff and Program Committee have to know what worked well and what didn’t.

3. Introduce the speaker by name, title, place of work and title of their talk. Write this down if it helps.

4. Keep everyone on time. The meeting is scheduled by the minute and experienced AALAS attendees tend to move between presentations, attending only those specific talks with which they are interested. If the speaker is running long, indicate to them to finish up their talk. Techniques to use include flashing the red light, pointing to your watch, or even getting up and stand on the podium. If you have extra time, be prepared to ask a question or two, extend a break, or give a brief intermission.

5. Do not allow speakers to begin until their allotted time in the program. If you have to make a difficult decision (add a break, add extra time at the end, work through the break); tell the audience what will happen. Audience participants understand this and will appreciate your working to keep the session on time. It is not desirable to “get done early” as this may result in someone showing up for a scheduled talk only to find the session ended.
6. **Know what is occurring in your room directly after your session.** It may be that you can let speakers run longer if there are no plans to use the room afterwards and the discussion seems particularly robust. You might query the audience to gage whether they want to continue a particularly good discussion at the conclusion of the planned session. Don’t make the assumption however, that the room is available. It will be disastrous if people are trying to get into the room and your session is running over.

7. If the discussion waxes long, and you don’t have the option of running late, don’t be shy about stepping in and saying “We only have time for one more question” or “This will be the last question.” The audience knows you are trying to keep the session running smoothly.

8. If someone shows up late for their time slot – try to squeeze their presentation in at the break or perhaps the audience can stay late to hear the presentation after the scheduled session (see above about room availability). Try not to back-up the entire session because one person shows up late. It’s more professional to keep on schedule and allow them an opportunity at the end, if time permits. If you cannot squeeze them in during the break and there is no time available at the end of the session, the talk should be canceled.
American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS)  
National Meeting  
Emergency Action Procedures for Session Disruption

Purpose
This Emergency Action Plan is intended as a guide to manage security risks or protest activity in session rooms during the AALAS National Meeting. This plan is to be followed to ensure the safety of conference attendees, AALAS staff, and the general public while minimizing any disruption or inconvenience to the session.

Contacting Emergency Personnel
1. Use the phone located in each of the meeting rooms or any office phone or your cell phone to contact 911 directly. Please inform the Public Safety Office at 512-404-4111 or 4111 on house phone and advise them of situation.
2. Remain calm and tell the public safety dispatcher the nature of the problem and your location.
3. Stay on the line until the dispatcher has all of the information they need.
4. Non-emergency questions or notifications may be directed to John Sancenito, Director of Risk Management for AALAS at 717-443-2677 (cellular) or jsancenito@ina-inc.com (email).

Medical Emergency
1. It is important to remain calm and take charge of the situation by addressing the attendees. Tell them that you will temporary suspend the session while the medical emergency is addressed.
2. Clear the area around the subject and make sure that responding emergency services personnel have a clear path to the subject.
3. Appoint someone to stand outside the room and direct emergency responders to the subject.

Fire Alarm
1. Audible alarms and strobe lights will blink.
2. Direct everyone to exit the room and proceed to the nearest building exit.
3. Exit with the attendees and move away from the building.
4. Convention Center personnel will be present along the evacuation route and will direct attendees to the appropriate assembly areas.

Demonstration within Meeting Room:
1. Remain calm and take charge of the situation by addressing the attendees. The group will look to you to determine if they should be alarmed.
2. Politely request that the individual cease and desist their disruptive behavior or they will be asked to leave the meeting i.e., “You have been asked to stop your disruptive behavior and yet you still refuse to comply. If you do not immediately cease your behavior, I will ask for you to be removed”.
3. Calmly make an announcement that “Certain individuals have decided to exercise their right to free speech. We will take a momentary break to allow security to deal with the situation.”
4. No attempt should be made to debate the disruptive individual.
5. A Public Safety Officer from the Convention Center will request the individual to leave the session and issue a Trespass Warning to the individual if they do not comply.
6. Law enforcement will be on site and will take action if necessary.

Earthquake - Tornado
1. Sheltering in place is the best option unless you are at risk of debris falling from overhead. You are much safer inside a building than outside during an earthquake.
2. Remain calm and instruct everyone to stay where they are, cover their head and wait for further instruction.
3. Follow evacuation instructions which will be broadcast over the PA system and/or Convention Center Security Officers.
Public Relations
Only AALAS designated public relations staff may issue public statements about meeting disruptions. No member of the staff or member of AALAS should speak publicly on behalf of the organization.