NAVIGATING THE SEALS PROGRAM SUBMISSION PROPOSAL PROCESS

Planning for next year's Southeastern Association of Law Schools (SEALS) program is underway. If you wish to submit a proposal for a Panel or a Discussion Group, you can do so through a link on the SEALS website at http://sealslawschools.org/conference-submissions/.

The hallmark of SEALS is that it strives to be a very democratic and participatory organization. It also focuses on welcoming new and junior scholars into the academy. As a result, you need not be a section chair (we don't have chairs!) or a resource member to propose programming or volunteer to take part in the annual meeting. However, we also build communities around subject matter Resource Teams. Although you are not required to use these teams, they are there as a resource for you and help promote inclusive, dynamic planning. They are not gatekeepers on proposals. The program is created and driven by suggestions from professors at SEALS institutional and affiliate member schools. So, if you wish to organize a Panel or a Discussion Group, just do it! You can simply create the proposal and submit it through the SEALS website. If you wish to discuss your proposal before submission, to have a good sense of whether it is likely to be accepted, please consult with the SEALS Interim Executive Director & Chair of the Program Committee, Professor Caprice Roberts at LSU Law (clroberts@lsu.edu). Specific requirements for Panels and Discussion Groups are set forth below.

SEALS realizes that some individuals may not feel comfortable with the idea of organizing their own Panel or Discussion Group. SEALS has created communities in particular subject matter areas led by Resource Teams: http://sealslawschools.org/boards-and-committees/resource-teams/. Please reach out to them to learn about proposal plans that you can join. If you have questions, or wish to start a new team, contact SEALS Deputy Executive Director & Vice-chair of the Program Committee, Professor Melissa T. Lonegrass at LSU Law (mlonegrass@lsu.edu).

If you would like to organize your own Panel or Discussion Group, but you are not sure that you can find the requisite number of participants or are not sure whether your proposal would have a good chance of acceptance, contact the SEALS Interim Executive Director. She can provide you with advice regarding how to craft a suitable and appealing proposal. In addition, SEALS can distribute your call for participants through its email distribution system. You also may want to issue a call for participants more broadly with listservs you are on or through blogs with audiences you wish to solicit.

To receive full consideration, it is best that you submit your proposal by mid-December. Once you submit a proposal, it will be evaluated by the SEALS Interim Executive Director, who has the authority to accept the proposal. In an appropriate case, she may provide you with feedback, suggest changes, or direct you to coordinate with a Resource Team. If the Executive Director believes that a proposal should be rejected or needs more work, she will refer it to the Program Advisory Committee (PAC), which will make a final decision regarding how to proceed. The PAC can recommend acceptance of a proposal or (more commonly) work with the proposer to iron out any difficulties. We will circulate a draft program for comments and then a final program for reliance before registration.

Listed below are the types of programs that SEALS offers, along with the rules applicable to each program. Three particularly important rules are the inclusiveness rule (you must try to make the Panel diverse along a number of metrics), the one-panel per person rule (a person may not serve as a panelist or moderator on more than one panel), and the panel composition rules (which differ slightly for Panels and Discussion Groups).

INCLUSIVENESS POLICY

Every effort should be made to ensure diversity in SEALS programming. Diversity is defined broadly to include ideological diversity, diversity in schools represented, and diversity based on identity characteristics like race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

PANELS

Panels are the traditional presentations at most conferences. The time allotted is about 1 hour 45 minutes, and between 4 and 6 panelists do presentations around a central theme or subject. You should leave time for questions or discussion with the audience at the end of the presentations. Here are the rules that govern Panels:

- Panels must include at least four speakers.
- Panels must include both a title for the program, as well as a description of the program.
- If your proposal would fit into a workshop in a particular area (e.g., constitutional law, criminal procedure, business law, teaching), please indicate that fact in your proposal.
- Before you list someone as a speaker, please confirm that person is willing and able to participate.
- The one-panel-per-person rule applies. No attendee may serve on more than one panel. This rule governs all kinds of panels and includes moderators and panelists. There are several situations in which this rule will not apply: the Call for Papers presentations, Discussion Groups, New Scholars and Mentors for New Scholars, WIPS, and programming in the other special workshops with attendance limited to special registrants (e.g., the workshops for new law teachers and prospective law teachers).
- Only one person per school can be on a panel unless the two people are co-authors. They are treated as one person for purposes of time.
- At least half the panelists (including the moderator) must be from institutional and affiliate member schools, http://sealslawschools.org/member-schools/. At least one-fourth of the panelists (including the moderator) must be from institutional member schools.

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Discussion Groups require ten discussants, with the designation of one of them as the moderator of the discussion. Groups may include a few additional discussants. Discussion Groups are scheduled in two hour, two-and-a-half-hour, or three-hour blocks. The discussants often have concise written papers on a central theme, abstracts, or have prepared some thoughts around several questions connected to that theme. The discussants circulate their papers or thoughts in writing before the conference, spend 3-5 minutes summarizing their points, and then discuss the theme in more depth along with all attendees in the room. Wide audience participation and discussion are the focus of this kind of programming.

- To propose a Discussion Group, you will need at least ten discussants, and you select your own moderator from the group.
- Discussion Group proposals must include a title, as well as a description of the Discussion Group.
- Before you list someone as a speaker, please confirm that person is willing and able to participate.

- If your proposal would fit into a workshop in a particular area (e.g., constitutional law, criminal procedure, business law, teaching), please indicate that fact in your proposal.
- The one-panel-per-person rule does not apply.
- The one-person-per-school rule does not apply.
- Discussion Group organizers must issue a call for participants.
- At least one-fourth of the discussants must be from institutional and affiliate member schools.

TOPICAL WORKSHOPS

Sometimes several pieces of programming are pulled together to create a workshop focused on a particular subject, like criminal law, workplace law, or health law, that lasts a day or several days. Such workshops can involve either panels or discussion groups and can be organized by anyone from an institutional or affiliate member school. Attendance is open to everyone.

NEW SCHOLARS COLLOQUIA

The dean or associate dean of each member and affiliate member school may nominate a faculty member for the New Scholars program through the New Scholars nomination portal, https://www.sealslawschools.org/submissions/newscholars/scholars.php, which asks for basic information about the nominee and the proposed presentation (title and short synopsis). Those new scholars are organized into thematic panels of three to four presenters, and each one is assigned a mentor with expertise in the subject of their presentation. New scholar panels may be loosely grouped thematically, where possible, and scheduled near similar subjects in the regular program, where possible. Each new scholar is given 25–30 minutes for presentation and questions and discussion. We aim to schedule new scholar panels for morning times to encourage attendance. All of this is done to ensure that more senior scholars, and not just mentors, are able to identify which panels to attend to offer support for new scholars in their area. The focus of this type of programming is supportive and constructive feedback for the new scholars.

PROGRAMMING SPONSORED BY SEALS COMMITTEES

Some SEALS committees put on special programming. For example, the New Scholars Committee and the Beginning & Newer Law Teachers Workshop Committee have sponsored programming on teaching, scholarship, service, and self-promotion, likely to be of special interest to those newer to teaching. The Global Outreach Committee has put on programming relating to specific international initiatives or issues. Additionally, the Electronic Education Committee has organized programming related to that subject.

OTHER SPECIAL WORKSHOPS WITH ATTENDANCE LIMITED TO SPECIAL REGISTRANTS

SEALS has included several workshops limited to special registrants, such as an *Empirical Workshop* with intensive training on empirical methods. Recurring workshops include:

Prospective Law Teachers Workshop: This workshop, designed for those interested in becoming law teachers, provides mock interviews and job talks, in addition to panels devoted to helping participants navigate the legal hiring market.

Beginning and Newer Law Teachers Workshop: This workshop, designed for faculty in their first year or so of teaching, provides programming that affords participants an in-depth introduction and specific tools to help them develop their classroom skills, scholarship, and record of service.

SUBMITTING A TOPIC PROPOSAL

To submit a proposal, go to the SEALS website http://sealslawschools.org/conference-submissions/. From there, you will complete a three-step process:

Step 1 Details. Step 1 of the submission process requires that you understand the rules governing Panels (set forth on that page and described above). Then you must complete a form with your Panel or Discussion Group details as follows:

1. Select whether you are proposing a Panel or a Discussion Group.
2. Enter the title of your proposed Panel or Discussion Group (no more than 15 words).
3. Include a formal Panel description that must be between 60 and 120 words. This description will appear in the official SEALS program.
4. Select the subject matter category of your Panel or Discussion Group.
5. Select the duration of your Panel or Discussion Group with options from 2 hours, 2.5 hours, or 3 hours. Generally, Panels are 1 hour 45 minutes.
6. If your Panel or Discussion Group fits into a particular workshop, please indicate that.
7. Finally, the last category of the form allows you to make other comments or requests.
8. Once you have completed the form, click the button at the bottom of the form, which takes you to step 2 of the submission process.

Step 2 Participants. Step 2 of the submission process requests information regarding the Panel or Discussion Group participants, including the names of the participants, their institutions, and email addresses. If a participant is already a member of the SEALS database of past participants, then search by last name and select the participant to add them to the submission. If they are not in the database, then supply all the requested information. Moderator designation is required for Discussion Groups. You also may provide a Moderator for your Panel, or we will assist you and provide one.

Before completion, we ask you to explain how the panel composition seeks to satisfy our diversity goals. Again, be sure you have permission from everyone you list.

Step 3 Confirm. Step 3 of the submission process requires that you confirm your submission.