

Population Association of America

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Dear PAA Member:

On behalf of the PAA 2008 Program Committee, we are pleased to present the Preliminary Program for the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America. The meeting will be held in New Orleans from Thursday April 17 to Saturday April 19, 2008 at the Sheraton Hotel.

The creation of the program for the annual meetings of the PAA is the product of the research interests of our membership. Following last year's meeting, PAA members submitted over 125 suggested sessions for the 2008 meetings. Based on these suggestions, investigation of the most popular sessions (as measured by the volume of submissions) at recent meetings, and informal canvassing of PAA members, the PAA Program Committee assembled a list of 92 regular sessions that were listed in the Call for Papers posted on the website in July. The program committee endeavored to create broad topics for sessions and, to the extent possible, recruited members to serve as session organizers who had not been in this role in the last two years.

More than 1856 submissions came into the PAA Meetings website. The real heroes of program planning are the session organizers who read and evaluated the submissions under quite a tight deadline. With 92 regular session organizers, the mean number of papers per organizer is about 20, but a number of the organizers had more than 50 submissions: Victor Agadjanian, Alaka Malwade Basu, Pamela R. Bennett, Timothy J. Biblarz, Michael E. Foster, Kristen Harknett, Rachel T. Kimbro, Elizabeth M. King, S. Philip Morgan, Liana C. Sayer, Gillian Stevens, Susan Watkins and John R. Warren. Susan Watkins deserves special mention for handling 103 submissions! The PAA Program Committee is grateful for the extra effort that was required.

For session organizers who received many more good papers than could be accommodated in a single session, additional "overflow" sessions were added to the program. Eight additional sessions were created from abstracts and papers submitted directly to the President or that were routed to him by the organizers. There are approximately 70 posters in each of the seven poster sessions. In all, we are able to accommodate over 1000 of the submissions in the 2008 PAA program. The preliminary program includes over 2000 participants (including co-authors of multiple authored papers). It is hard to imagine a more productive and participatory scholarly association.

All of this is possible because hundreds of PAA members spend countless volunteer hours working as members of the program committee and as session organizers. THANK YOU! We also appreciate the willingness of PAA members to serve as discussants and session chairs. We owe debts of gratitude to Germán Rodríguez who is the creator of the machinery behind the PAA Meetings website and database, and Lili Largent, who assisted Duncan on many of the myriad details involved in organizing the program. Special thanks go to Philippe Migrenne, who devoted enormous energy to the many issues that arose with the submissions and organizer judging. Philippe, Germán, Chang Chung, and Lili -- thank you for your dedication and service!

There are 13 invited sessions on a variety of special topics. Several are on post-Katrina New Orleans and what we have learned from demographic research on similar natural disasters. Mark Vanlandingham was instrumental in organizing a number of them. Tim Smeeding has organized a panel on what we have learned from 40 years of poverty research. John Weeks has organized a big-think panel on the past and future of the PAA.

As in the past, we also take time at the PAA Annual Meeting to remember members of our field who have passed away since our last meeting. David Heer will be remembered at a special session on Thursday evening, 8:30-10:00 pm. If you know of other PAA members who have passed away during the past year, please let Bill Frey (billf@umich.edu) know so that their names may be included in the memorial service program. Members are encouraged to participate in this session and to contribute remembrances of recently deceased members.

More information can be found on the PAA website. The PAA Board continues to search for creative ways to enhance access at the annual meetings for all members within the constraints of our very limited association resources. The presidential session will also be captioned for those with special hearing needs. Suggestions to improve access to the meetings are most welcome.

As in recent years, there will be LCD projectors and overhead projectors in all sessions. Presenters (or session organizers) are responsible for bringing a laptop computer with their PowerPoint presentations to connect to the LCD projector. The PAA program will continue until 2:20 pm on Saturday afternoon.

Sessions will be 110 minutes and many sessions will include two discussants in order to maximize feedback to paper authors. Unless otherwise directed by the session chair, authors should plan on no more than 12-15 minutes for their presentation. This will leave time for introductions, transitions, discussants, audience questions and comments. As with last year, poster sessions will group posters by broad topic area – fertility, marriage, children, health etc. We hope that this will help specialists who visit poster sessions to find the posters in their specialty areas, as well as group together poster authors with similar interests.

New Orleans is a unique city with numerous attractions. Located between the French Quarter and the Arts District, the Sheraton New Orleans Hotel, home to the PAA 2008 Meeting, resides in the Central Business District. From countless guided tours and museums, to galleries, jazz clubs and shopping - visitors are surrounded by history, fascinating architecture, and diverse culture. Countless restaurants and pubs offering the tastes of Louisiana cuisine make New Orleans one of the top 3 food destinations in the world!

A canoeing adventure along the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain is just one of many exciting things recommended to PAA attendees organized by Mark Vanlandingham and his local arrangements team. This is a guided tour through the wetlands that requires reservations. Members who are interested in seeing first hand the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina will be interested in the Katrina Tour-Gray Line Tours. Attendees will be seated on a 25-passenger bus while listening to a narration of events, looking at the destruction and improvement of afflicted areas. This year, PAA is encouraging members to volunteer some of their time to help clean up the damaged City Park of New Orleans. This will be a chance to contribute to the rebuilding of this great city, as endless others from all over the world have and continue to do so.

Registration details about the tours and volunteerism are located on the PAA Website.

We look forward to seeing you in New Orleans.

Best wishes for a happy new year,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meg Munn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M".

President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Thomson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "E".

Vice-President