



# Responsibilities of a Panel Respondent

The respondent is an important and integral part of the conference. The respondent is an additional presenter that provides an analysis and synthesis of the research presented. The respondent is responsible for two tasks-- providing feedback to the presenters on their research and to find and articulate a common theme for the session. In order for the respondent to provide meaningful feedback to the presenters it is important that they receive and read the papers before the session. It is not enough to simply listen to the presentations and then attempt to provide feedback and discern a theme. The respondent should receive a copy of the papers to which they will respond from the division chair. In some cases the presenter will send you a revised version of their paper. In this case, it is the presenter's responsibility to provide you the latest version of their paper.

In your response you should endeavor to point out the contribution of the research to the discipline, comment on any significant innovations, contextualize their research within a particular strand of research, expand on interesting or important findings, and point out future directions. In reality, especially with undergraduate papers, all of these functions may not be possible. However, you should endeavor to talk meaningfully and respectfully about the research. When you point out future direction it is appropriate to offer suggestions to improve the findings of the paper. However, be gentle and future oriented, especially with undergraduates.

The respondent also has the responsibility to discern a theme for the session and to set the agenda for the questions and comments. Hopefully, the papers have been grouped together by the division chair based upon readily apparent similarities, however that is not always possible. It may be that the papers share a method, theory, or topic. In some cases there will be little apparent similarity, in this case the respondent should find a way to connect them so as to offer a general commentary on the purpose of the session or on the general mode, field, or topic. The respondent should talk about each paper individually and then offer their synthesis. It is important that the respondent, like the presenters, hold to the time limits delineated by the chair in order to allow adequate time for questions and comments.