

First things first:

These first items go together because they affect each other. If you can identify two potential weekends the hotel is available, it may help to secure the keynote speaker.

### **1.1 Theme**

Best if chosen collaboratively. Try to find something that will encourage diverse presentations and excite people about coming—current topics and ideas are good.

#### **Attachments:**

- Conference venue proposals
- Call for proposals
- Proposal submission form

### **1.2. Keynote**

1. Can you find someone who fits or will shape your theme? Who will draw attendees?
2. Will your speaker do some extras for you, like visit with your tutors or do a wrap-up session? (This may be a way to justify the expense of the honorarium, which your university will be asked to pay. If that is not possible, we have paid them from our conference income in the past.) If you add a Thursday session, your speaker will need to arrive on Wednesday night.
3. Negotiate with the hotel to comp a room for your keynote speaker.
4. Will you have other invited speakers, if so, how will they fit together with your keynote speaker?
5. How long will the keynote address be? It is typically delivered at lunch and you will need to schedule at least 90 minutes total, two hours is better. The speaker needs to be able to eat first and you need time for conference scholarships and other announcements, so 30-40 minutes for the keynote should work.
6. How much will you pay the keynote speaker? As an example, in one case, \$2000.00 for three day's work was paid—the tutor meeting Thursday, the keynote on Friday, and the wrap-up on Saturday, and travel expenses were paid separately (with the hotel comped). The hotel often comps the speaker's room for four nights (Wednesday-Saturday). The host may need to pay air fare and transportation to and from the airport, meals, and airport parking, if

applicable. Travel expenses can be paid either as part of the honorarium or separate from it.

**Attachments:**

- Contract for Dr. Ede

**1.3. Venue & dates**

1. How can you keep it affordable? Hotels charge for session rooms and technology. Universities may require travel away from the hotel. Find out if the hotel will comp session rooms per increments of guest rooms booked. We had all Saturday session rooms comped, plus two guest rooms. Our hotel charged too much for technology—rental for computers, projectors, screens and set up fees, so even bringing equipment was too high. They also charged for internet connection. Check policies on all of these before making decisions about hotels.
2. Make sure you stay away from spring break and 4Cs.

**Attachments:**

- Bayou Theater expenses
- SSH contract

**1.4. Transportation**

1. Is there an airport shuttle to the hotel? We found that a hotel that operates its own shuttle is more reliable than one that contracts out.
2. If you hold Friday sessions on a campus, will you need to move people there? People prefer sessions at the hotel because it is more convenient. They must be at the hotel on Saturday because they will be flying out and will need to be at the hotel to check out, etc. We moved people to the university because it was so expensive to rent technology at the hotel. Note that the attached shuttle bill was for two buses and we used only one. Many people had cars

and did not need transportation, but if you can avoid doing this, I recommend it.

3. Will transportation to social activities be easy? Most people will not have transportation and will want to walk to restaurants, if possible.

**Attachments:**

- Contract for Clear Lake Shuttle

**1. 5. Accommodations**

The hotel should be comfortable and affordable. Some hotels include breakfast, but the room rates will go up for doubles, triples, and quads. Many tutors will stay with each other, so don't count on one room per person. Set aside a reasonable block of guest rooms, make sure attendees know the deadlines, and watch them yourself. Some contracts include a penalty for not reserving all of the rooms.

Many hotels will add complimentary session rooms, guest rooms and/or services if you negotiate.

**Attachments:**

- Contract with South Shore Harbour

**1. 6. Meals**

Friday lunch is traditional—no opting out; Saturday lunch is optional and will cost extra. Not everyone stays for Saturday, so if you decide to do a lunch, make people commit to being there by charging something.

**Attachments:**

- UHCL catering bill
- SSH catering bill

## **1.7. Technology**

1. Will the hotel have access to computers, overheads, internet?
2. What will the charge be?
3. Can you get these services free at your university?
4. Will guest rooms have free internet?

### **Attachments:**

- SSH contract

## **1.8. Conference Website**

Design and publish your website before you announce the conference. That way people can find answers to their questions right away. See sample pages for menus to get an idea of what kind of information to include.

If you would prefer not to host the site, you can send materials to the SCWCA webmaster to add to the SCWCA site—otherwise, you will link from the SCWCA site to your conference site.

You can use Google docs to create on-line submission and acceptance forms and that way multiple people can have access to the information.

### **Attachments:**

- Sample web pages

## **1.9. Proposal process**

Set reasonable deadlines for proposals and then stick to them. Notify people early enough that they have time to apply for travel funds. Create the schedule as soon as you have notified participants so you can work out scheduling problems.

### **Attachments:**

- Call for proposals
- Proposal submission form

### **1.10. Registration**

1. Try to stay organized as you gather information—Excel spreadsheets allow you to manipulate data.
2. Get information about co-presenters and panel groups so you know whether presenters are faculty, staff, or peer tutors.
3. Make sure that presenters know early on that they have to pay registration fees just like everyone else.
4. The treasurer will collect the fees and registration information, so keep in close contact about this information.

#### **Attachments:**

- Copy of registration document

### **1.11. Materials and Supplies**

1. There are all kinds of small things you will need. See expense sheet for a list so you will have an idea.

#### **Attachments:**

- List of supplies

### **1.12. Extras**

Flowers? Gift baskets? Give-aways? All of these things add to the quality of the conference, how many can you afford? What can you get for free?

### **1.13. Scholarships**

Build the deadline into your notification process so that applicants know early on that they will receive funds. Let the SCWCA webmaster know so the information on the SCWCA web site can be changed.

**Attachments:**

- Scholarship policy

**1. 14. Communication**

Acknowledge everything:

- Proposals
- Acceptances (Most universities require these for travel funding, so make them formal and timely.)
- Registrations
- Queries

Use multiple venues:

- Wcenter
- SCWCA listserv
- Contacts list
- Mail
- SCWCA web site
- IWCA web site

We set up a gmail account and created standard responses that a receptionist could send out. This way we kept on top of the communication. Once you have a list of presenters, create a distribution list so you can send conference information. People will forget about details, so remind them in the weeks before the conference date about travel arrangements, dining, weather, etc. Well timed reminders also help to get people excited about attending.

**1. 15. Publicity**

1. Send announcements to WCenter
2. Send announcements to IWCA and WLN.
3. Send announcements to SCWCA listserv.
4. Send announcements to SCWCA webmaster to add to SCWCA web site.
5. Make sure you contact local community colleges. They may not be on any of the listservs, so a paper brochure might be a good idea.

**Attachments:**

- IWCA announcement

**1.16. Outstanding Tutor Award**

Make sure you include this deadline in your materials and build time into the Friday lunch for the announcement. let the SCWCA webmaster know so the announcement can be added to the website.

**Attachments:**

- Outstanding Tutor Award Policy

**1. 17. Expenses**

Cut costs where you can and do not stint on things that affect quality—lanyards will be tossed, but the program should be attractive and readable. Consider what you have the staff-power to accomplish and what you do not before committing to a specific task. If you search for something on the internet, keep looking until you can halve the first price you find.

**Attachments:**

- Conference expense summary

**1. 18. Evaluation form**

Don't forget to give out an evaluation form!

**Attachments:**

- Conference evaluation form

## **Appendices**

1. Conference venue proposal
2. Call for proposals
3. Proposal submission form
4. Keynote contract
5. South Shore Harbour contract
6. Bayou Theater contract
7. Clear Lake shuttle contract
8. Catering information
9. Sample web pages
10. Registration document
11. List of supplies
12. Scholarship policy
13. Outstanding tutor award policy
14. Expense summary
15. Evaluation form

[SCWCA Conference Planning Guide Appendices](#)

[Conference info for IWCA](#)

[SCWCA Banquet](#)