

Advice for Seminar Leaders

We ran our double seminar on a single day (Thursday morning and afternoon), which we would recommend both for the momentum it afforded the conversation and to promote cross-attendance. We split each seminar into small exchange groups (3-4 people), and they sent one another written comments before the seminar. We each took the “lead” for one seminar, which meant that we made very brief opening remarks, and then divided the seminar time equally between the exchange groups. We introduced the papers in an exchange group by summarizing the papers as well as briefly explaining our rationale for grouping those papers. This enabled us to remind all seminar participants of the content of the papers under discussion at a given time (a challenge with so many papers!) and to make the seminar more accessible to auditors. We posed some preliminary questions for each group to get the conversation rolling, and then handed the seminar discussion floor to that group for approximately twenty minutes. We also reserved some time at the end of the seminar for auditors to ask questions and contribute comments.

We have reproduced our email correspondence leading up to the seminar below.

Email 1: Welcome message

Subject: Welcome to Alternative Times and Possible Futures!

Date: October 11, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the 2018 Shakespeare Association of America seminar on "Alternative Times and Possible Futures, Parts I and II." We are very excited to have all of you enrolled, and thank you for choosing to participate.

Over the course of the next few months, we're looking forward to getting better acquainted with all of you electronically. Below please find a schedule outlining deadlines by which to circulate materials (to us and to each other) as we all prepare for a stimulating discussion in Los Angeles in the spring. If you consult the attached seminar roster, you'll see that the list extends for quite a while—the possibilities worth imagining for this cluster of topics and questions are so bountiful that there will, in fact, be two separate sessions! Though you will ultimately be officially enrolled in only one of them, we certainly hope that you'll consider attending the seminar session to which you are not officially assigned as an auditor. At the end of this email, we've included the seminar description that you read in the Bulletin. We look forward to seeing how the questions and concerns that originally inspired us take new and varied shape through your papers and our collective conversation when we finally meet in person in March. Finally, please note that the schedule is devised to ensure that we can all honor the SAA deadlines that enable you to be officially enrolled in a seminar and recorded in the conference program.

Schedule:

October 15: Please send a brief email to Katherine and J.K. by this date to verify that you've received this message.

December 15: Deadline for sending an abstract, including paper title, to J.K. and Katherine (something tentative is fine).

January 19: Deadline for sending your completed paper (7-9 double-spaced pages) to Katherine and J.K.

February 19: Papers will be circulated to both seminars; exchange groups announced

March 15: Deadline for sending one-page responses for papers in your exchange group (circulate to your exchange group and to J.K. and Katherine)

March 28-31: SAA (please note that we have requested that both sessions be scheduled on the same day to facilitate cross-attendance)

Seminar Description:

Alternative Times and Possible Futures

This seminar invites papers on how early modern writers project alternative temporalities and on the resources (philosophical, theological, technological, historical, magical, linguistic, literary), aims, and effects of doing so. Possible topics: potential/possibility; emotions or relations invested in the future; certainty/uncertainty (contingency, fortune, luck, opportunity, probability, inevitability, etc.); technologies—including literary techniques—for crafting future or alternative time.

Looking forward,
J.K. and Katherine

Email 2: Deadline reminder

Subject: SAA deadline reminder: abstracts 12/15, papers 1/19

Date: December 3, 2017

Dear "Alternative Times and Possible Futures" seminararians,

Can it be December already? This email is a quick reminder of upcoming deadlines for our SAA seminar:

December 15: Deadline for sending an abstract, including paper title, to J.K. and Katherine (something tentative is fine).

January 19: Deadline for sending your completed paper (7-9 double-spaced pages) to Katherine and J.K.

We look forward to learning about everyone's paper ideas. Let us know if you have any questions.

All best,
Katherine

Email 3: Missing abstract inquiry

Subject: SAA abstract?
Date: January 7, 2018

Hi [Participant], I'm writing to check in about the SAA seminar – J. K. and I asked for abstracts by December 15th. Is yours on the way? See below for details, and thanks,

Email 4: Deadline reminder

Subject: SAA deadline reminder: papers due Friday (1/19)
Date: January 14, 2018

Dear "Alternative Times and Possible Futures" seminararians,

Hope your 2018 is off to a wonderful start. This email is a quick reminder of important upcoming dates for our SAA seminar (including this Friday's paper deadline):

Friday, January 19: Deadline for sending your completed paper (7-9 double-spaced pages) to Katherine and J.K.

February 19: Papers will be circulated to both seminars; exchange groups announced

March 15: Deadline for sending one-page responses for papers in your exchange group (circulate to your exchange group and to J.K. and Katherine)

We're looking forward to reading your papers. Let us know if you have any questions.

All best,
J.K. (and Katherine)

Email 5: Missing paper inquiry

Subject: SAA paper
Date: February 7, 2018

Dear [Participant],

Since we haven't received your paper, J. K. and I are wondering if you're still planning to participate in the SAA "Alternative Times and Possible Futures" seminar. If the answer is yes, we do need your paper ASAP. The SAA is asking us to confirm submissions, and those who haven't submitted their papers won't have their names printed in the program.

Thanks and all best,
Katherine (and J. K.)

Email 6: Exchange group instructions

Subject: SAA Exchange groups for Alternative Times and Possible Futures seminar
Date: February 19, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

Attached please find a document containing information about your paper exchange group and seminar time slot for SAA 2018. You will shortly receive a message (from Katherine) inviting you to our group DropBox folder. All of the papers are available there. You will also find an updated list of seminar participants in that DropBox folder. Both seminars will take place on Thursday, March 29, and there are many rich strands of connection in the papers across both sessions; though you are officially enrolled in only one seminar, we certainly hope that you'll consider attending as an auditor the seminar session to which you are not officially assigned!

Be sure to circulate your one-page response to the author of each paper in your group by March 15 (and please send a copy to J.K. and Katherine, too). We will post all of the responses on DropBox. Finally, before the conference, we will make abstracts of all the papers available to any auditors, so if you would like to send an updated abstract, please do so by March 15. If we don't receive an updated abstract, we'll use your original abstract.

Looking forward to exciting discussions of these fascinating papers on March 29!

All best,
J.K. and Katherine

Email 7: Deadline reminder

Subject: SAA deadline reminder: responses and revised abstracts
Date: March 12, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

Here's a reminder that March 15th, which is fast approaching, is your deadline to send a response to each member of your paper exchange group for our "Alternative Times and Possible Futures" SAA seminar. Please also send a copy of each of your responses to J. K. and me. March 15th is also the deadline to send J. K. and me a revised abstract, if you have one. Abstracts will be distributed to seminar auditors.

As responses come in, we are uploading them to the Dropbox folder, so you may view them there. If you having any difficulties accessing that Dropbox folder, please let me (Katherine) know and I'll try to resolve the issue.

Between the papers and your responses to them, we have much wonderful material to discuss! Looking forward to seeing you all in L.A.

All best,
Katherine and J. K.