ATTENDING RESEARCH CONFERENCES SUCCESSFULLY

With Dr. Ken Seligson
Department of Anthropology

MAR 19
2:30-3:30 PM
Who am I?

Dr. Ken Seligson
Associate Professor
Dept. of Anthropology

CSUDH – 5 years
USC – 3 years
PhD – U. of Wisconsin

Too many conferences to count
Why???

• Networking
• Sharing
• Learning
• CV/Resume building
• Practice
• Leadership/Org. Structure
• Socializing
• Travel
• Interviews
Where??

• Local conferences
• Regional conferences
• National conferences
• International conferences,

• Different purposes, different expectations, different pressure levels.
When???

- Now!
- Plan in advance
  - sometimes a year or more in advance
  - Look at annual calendar
  - Maybe one or two per year, maybe more if they are local
- Attend as Undergrad to build experience
How???
Plan ahead:
Finding Conferences and Funding

• Ask your professors
• Check professional org. websites
• OUR

• Apply for funding from
  • OUR
  • Professional organizations
  • Private foundations
Plan ahead: Conference Hotels

- Hotels, Convention Centers
- Reserved blocks, student rates
- Room with other students
- Positives:
  - Run into people
  - Can go right downstairs to sessions
- Negatives
  - Expensive
Plan ahead: Conference Attire

• Dress professionally appropriate to the conference vibe and location
• Pants, Skirt, Button-down…
• Making an impression
Plan ahead: Make a Budget

- Estimate a budget in advance as best you can
- Volunteer
- Be thrifty with food expenses
  - Bring food
  - Attend Conference events where food is served
Plan ahead:
Get Work Done in Advance

• Homework, grading, assignments
• Don’t expect to work at the conference
• Avoid being smacked by a return to reality the following week…
Presenting:
Presentation Formats

- Oral presentations
  - Symposia
- Poster presentations
- Lightning rounds
- Roundtables

- Different formats, different expectations, different levels of pressure
Presenting: Challenge Yourself

• The more presentations you give, the better and more comfortable you will be at it

• Very few people enjoy public speaking from the start

• YOU are the expert

• Maybe start off with small local conferences and then expand outward from there
Presenting: Practice!

- Practice your public speaking
  - On your own
  - Friends
  - Classes
  - Theater 120
Presenting: Organize a Session

• Make connections
• Build social capital
• Organizational experience
• Publication possibilities
• CV/Resume
• Make sure to not take on too much
Making the most of it: Networking

- Good place to meet researchers and scholars whose work interests you
- Your peers
- Attend conference functions, especially those for students
- Some advisers introduce you, others don’t
- Don’t put too much pressure on yourself – just hanging out is networking!
Make the most of it: Business Meetings

• Most conferences have “business meetings”
• Discuss policies, plans, position elections, awards
• Chance to see how organization or conference works
• Boring, but important
• Leadership?
• Student roles
• Sub-group/committee meetings
Make the most of it: Idea Notebook

• Bring a small notebook to take notes during sessions
• You will undoubtedly hear things that will spark your own ideas
• Research questions, methods, approaches you had not considered
• Phone…
Make the most of it: Business Cards

- …Or some way to share your contact information
- Digital Business cards
- QR codes
Make the most of it: Explore

• Explore the city
• Conference trips: local museums, institutes, or other local landmarks
• Chance to not only see the sights, but to socialize
Afterward:
Go with the Flow

• Take the inspiration and run with it
• Follow up on sources, articles, recommendations you received
• Start preparing for the next conference while the experiences of this last one are fresh in mind
Afterward:
Follow-Up Emails

• Strengthening connections
  • Established scholars
  • Peers
• Remembering you
• Building a rep
• Invite them to give a talk?
• “It was very nice to meet you…”
• “Look forward to following up again soon…”
And most importantly...

Enjoy!