

MPA - PSI CHI Conference Tips: 2010

Note: Arrangements for attending the conference are up to each individual student. Please consult with your faculty advisor. These are general tips.

1. **REGISTRATION:** Please register on-line for the conference. The site will open in mid February. It will be \$25 for undergraduates and graduate students and the site will only take credit cards. The exhibit hall will open for registration at 8 am on Thursday, April 30. The first posters will start at 9:00. If you pre-registered there will be a badge pre-printed for you. If you have not, you will need to register onsite. You will secure your badges and conference program books onsite. (P.S. The conference program book will be available on-line through the MPA website and you can plan out your full conference experience). If you register online - keep that email as your "receipt" for registration, if you need one.

2. **GUESTS?** Anyone who is attending or presenting at the conference needs to pay and register. However, if you have a guest who just wants to come in to see your poster and take a few pictures - he/she is welcome to do so without registering.

3. **PRESENTING YOUR POSTER:** Psi Chi has a webpage with tips for preparing and presenting posters - it is very helpful <http://www.psichi.org/conventions/tips.asp>. I would recommend having ~25 copies of a handout to accompany your poster. Your handout need not be a full paper, it can represent the poster materials; however, it should include references and contact information for you and your faculty advisor. Finally, some you may want to consider submitting a manuscript for review to the *Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research*. If you submitted in a timely manner to your receipt of this letter, you would have reviews back in the Spring. <http://www.psichi.org/pubs/journal/home.asp>.

4. **THE CONFERENCE:** All of the sessions are open to all registered attendees. Please take advantage of this professional development experience and go the Psi Chi speaker and several of the MPA talks. The conference program has a map of the Palmer House rooms. Paper sessions are timed. It is perfectly acceptable to enter a room "just" to hear one of the papers in which you might be interested and leave when it is over. It is also OK to quietly leave talks if you have another session to attend. Generally speaking, I think you will get the most out of the invited speakers - they have more time to delve into their topics and you might get to hear someone whose research you have read.

5. **HOW TO DRESS:** My usual recommendation to students is "at least one step up from jeans" and lean toward "corporate attire not club attire." You will see the gamut in your student and faculty colleagues. Also - I recommend comfortable shoes because you stand for a long time by your poster and move from room to room (but then again, I always recommend comfortable shoes!)

6. **MONEY:** In a survey of MPA undergraduate researchers, at least 50% of colleges and universities appear to offer some form of financial help for students who are presenting at conferences. Ask!

- Ask your Psi Chi Advisor first if he/she knows of avenues.
- If not, ask the department chair first and he/she may have you ask the Dean.
- Finally, because Psi Chi is a student club at most schools, check in with student activities, they sometimes have funds for these types of events associated with a club.

7. **LODGING:** Although there are a couple of cheaper hotels near the Palmer House Hilton, I strongly recommend that you stay in the hotel as all of the events are there. To get the best rates, you will want to call/book early and make sure that they know you are with MPA 2009 <http://www.midwesternpsych.org/meeting/hotel.php>. **WARNING** - Palmer House bills one night of the stay immediately - this often surprises students (and faculty!). If you are in a real financial bind - there is a well-rate hostel in Chicago <http://www.hichicago.org/>.

8. **SAVING MONEY:** Saving money on food is the easiest way to save money in Chicago. There are fast food restaurants right across the street, bakeries on the corner, and there are drugstores that sell pop and other snack foods close by. Parking is very expensive - if you know the city well - you could consider park and ride to save money.

Finally, it is appropriate to tip a hotel maid \$2 a day (or more) - this would be particularly true if the room had a lot of individuals who had used it. On the day you check out, just leave some cash in a reasonable place in the room (like under the corner of a lamp). **Wishing you a great conference experience!**