

Report from the Program Chairs

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We began preparing for LASA 2009 this past summer, in close collaboration with (then incoming) President Eric Hershberg and with the benefit of feedback from the program chairs for the Montreal Congress, Neil Harvey and María Socorro Tabuenca, and from several Montreal track chairs. The location of the 2009 Congress in Rio de Janeiro will be a first, and while this is very exciting, it introduces several unknowns into the planning process. Most importantly, it is difficult to project the number of proposals that we will receive for this Congress. For now, we are operating on the assumption that the number of submissions will be roughly the same as for the last two Congresses.

As has been done for most Congresses, we introduced a number of modifications into the menu of tracks. Most importantly, we broke the track with by far the largest number of submissions for Montreal, Democratization and Democratic Performance, into three separate tracks: Parties and Elections, Political Institutions and Processes, and Politics and Public Policy. We also broke another track with a very large number of submissions, Economies, Development and Regional Alternatives into two tracks: Development and Regional Alternatives, and Economics and Development. We did the same with the heavily subscribed track International Relations, Transnationalism and Globalization, breaking it into the separate tracks for International Relations, and Transnationalism and Globalization. We also reintroduced a track with previous history, Labor Studies and Class Relations, and we introduced three tracks in areas where important work has been done in the past few years and/or where there was strong interest: Human Rights and Memory, Latin American Diasporas, and Linguistic Pluralism and Language Policies. Finally, we deleted or regrouped the tracks that received

the lowest number of submissions for Montreal, and we tinkered with some names to clarify the areas that the tracks are to cover. We trust that the new track structure will accommodate the wide variety of interests and contributions that LASA members have to offer.

We are working on a number of ideas for high profile sessions that will address the Congress theme, Rethinking Inequalities. By press time these remain ideas, but stay tuned for updates in future issues of the *Forum*. Let us conclude by thanking all the colleagues who have agreed to take on the important role of track chairs for LASA 2009, as well as the LASA Secretariat, key participants in the planning process. ■