

Report from the Program Chairs

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In the months since our last report, LASA sent out acceptance notices to some 7,000 individuals. Many of the proposals consisted of entire panels, but many proposals were for individual papers. The individual paper proposals were handled in a two-stage process: The track chairs made decisions about acceptance and grouped the papers into panels with the greatest possible thematic coherence. Proposals that were accepted but could not be placed in this way were forwarded to us, with the charge to look across tracks to combine paper proposals into panels or accommodate them in already existing panels. In order to accommodate as many proposals as possible, we had to make frequent use of established LASA practice and ask many panel chairs to accept additional papers to their panels. The great majority of panel chairs graciously granted these requests, and we trust that these new papers will make excellent panels even better by offering additional perspectives.

The LASA Secretariat added Melissa Raslevich to its staff in order to deal with the extraordinary workload generated by the Congress. Despite great efforts of the highly efficient and committed staff, response time to emails sometimes remained longer than potential Congress participants would have hoped. We thank everybody for their hard work and their patience.

The planning of special panels and sessions has made much progress: The latest high-profile acceptances have come from ex-President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Nobel Laureate Joseph Stiglitz. There will be special panels on Rethinking Welfare States and Inequalities; on What Constitutes “Good Research”? Perspectives on Research Practice, Research Ethics, and Research Standards of “Truth” from the North and South; on Publishing Your Research in Academic Journals; on Inequalities in New

Latin American Cinema; and on Literature and the Left Turn in Latin America. After much negotiating, the receptions will be held at the university after the last panels of the day in order to make it as easy as possible for Congress participants to join them.

The Preliminary Program is on line at the LASA website <<http://lasa.international.pitt.edu/>>. Preregistration is required for all participants. Names of participants who fail to preregister will not appear in the Program book. Thus, this is a preliminary program in the true sense of the word. It happens before every Congress that some accepted participants fail to preregister and consequently some sessions are left with only a couple of papers. In those cases, we shall do our best to find panels for these remaining papers where they can be presented to an interested audience and stimulate dialogue with the other scholars on those panels.

The hotel information is available at the LASA website as well. We would encourage all participants to make their hotel reservations soon, to ensure that you get space in the hotel of your choice. All U.S. participants also need to keep in mind that Brazil has visa requirements, so it would be a good idea to get started on those *trâmites*.

The next report from the Program Chairs will appear immediately after the Congress. We hope that all planned events will occur with all preregistered participants, regardless of the dark economic clouds upon us. And we trust the intellectual excitement generated by the Congress will do justice to the preparatory work and the collective efforts of all the participants and the LASA staff. We are greatly looking forward to seeing you all in Rio. ■