

AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

2006 ANNUAL MEETING REVIEW SURVEY

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This report presents the findings of 2006 APSA Annual Meeting Review Survey undertaken under the auspices of the APSA Annual Meeting Review Committee. The committee was charged with reviewing the policies and practices of the Annual Meeting in order to make recommendations regarding improvements and changes. The last such review was done approximately ten years ago.

Two surveys were conducted to learn about members' relationship to the Annual Meeting. One survey was sent to members who had registered for the annual meeting and one survey was sent to a sample of members who did not register for the annual meeting.

There were 6261 APSA members registered for the 2006 annual meeting 209 names were not included in the survey: duplicate registrations, those without emails or non-working email addresses, and a few registrants who reported not attending the meeting. After all of these individuals were removed, there were 6052 potential respondents. . After the initial mailing and two follow-up emailings of the survey, 2492 individuals completed the study for a response rate of 41 percent.

Potential respondents received an email with a link taking them directly to the survey. Each link was unique, and an individual could only respond once to the survey. Respondents could start and complete the survey in more than one session.

Who Were the Participants in the Survey?

Tables 1 and 2 summarize the demographic profile of the respondents. Two-thirds of attendees hold a Ph.D. But many are recent Ph.D's, with a median age in the 30's. They are mainly in academic jobs, and one in five is a current student. NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding and non-response to particular questions.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents		
Characteristic	Percent	Number
Sex		
Male	56%	1399
Female	33	830
Nonresponse	11	
Education		
Ph.D	69%	1711
ABD	9	220
M.A. or M.S.	10	246
B.A. or B.S.	2	57
LL.B or J.D	.4	11
Other	1	31
Age		
29-29	13%	322
30-39	32	799
40-49	20	485
50-59	13	325
60-69	8	195
70 or older	2	41
Nonresponse	13	325
Race		
African-American	3%	67
Asian American	4	87
Caucasian	69	1730
Latino/a	4	90
Native American	.3	8
Other	9	228
Nonresponse	11	282
Year Received degree		
2000-2006	44%	1104
1995-1999	13	326
1990-1994	8	196
1980-1989	11	267
1970-1979	9	224
1969 or earlier	3	76

Table 2. Current Job		
Job	Percent	Number
Administration	4%	99
Business	.5	12
Consultant	2	48
Fellow	3	85
Government	2	41
Interest Group, Professional Association, Foundation	.5	12
k-12 Teacher	.4	11
Lecturer, Instructor	.2	6
Media	4	110
Professor-Adjunct	.1	3
Professor-Assistant	3	68
Professor-Associate	23	581
Professor-Emeritus	16	394
Professor-Full	1	26
Professor-Visiting	21	528
Researcher	2	52
Student	5	128
Unemployed	18	448
Retired	.4	9
Other	1	24
	.8	19

Other Jobs

Adjunct Professor in Foreign Country
 Administrative Assistant
 Attorney practicing part-time
 Graduate school applicant/intern with international org.
 I am an emeritus president and professor back 1/2 time
 Independent scholar/writer
 Lawyer
 Maitre de conferences in France, Visiting Professor in US
 Managing Editor of a Journal
 Reader
 Research associate as a fulltime faculty member
 Research Professor
 Restaurant Industry
 Retired-Part time lecturer
 Senior lecturer
 Temporary professor

Subfields

Respondents were asked to select the **four** special subfields that best apply to them. Listed below is the number of respondents who checked each subfield.

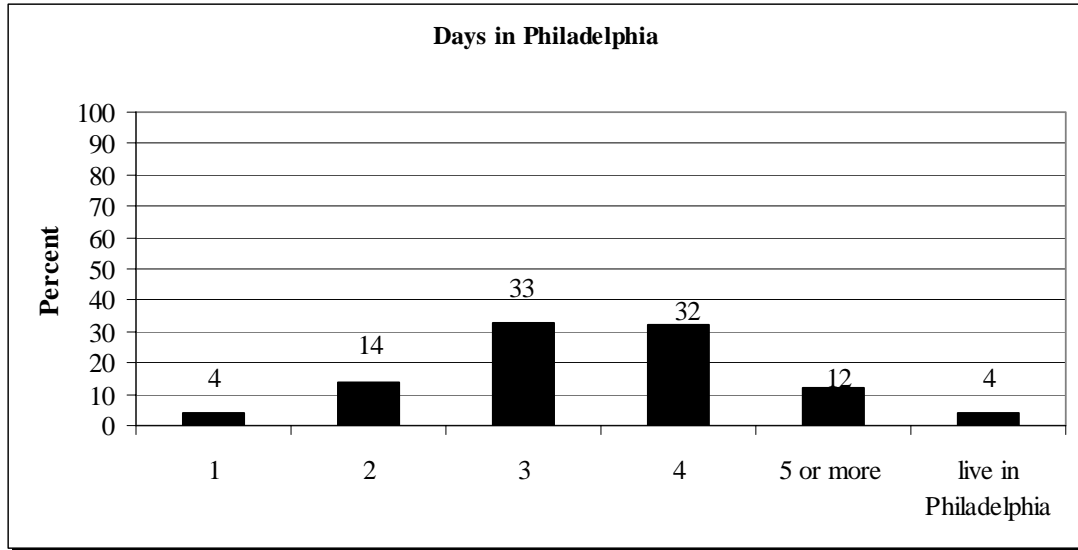
33	NOR Normative Political Theory	312
34	PTH Political Thought: Historical	277
28	RES Research Methods	253
38	ELB Electoral Behavior	239
51	PBH Political Behavior	234
55	POP Public Opinion	227
27	ISC International Security	223
31	PEC Political Economy	197
53	PAR Political Parties and Organizations	197
25	FOR Foreign Policy	186
1	CNG Congress	185
30	IPE International Political Economy	172
43	HIS History and Politics	171
52	PCM Political Communication	159
26	ILO International Law and Organizations	154
40	ETH Ethnic and Racial Politics	147
54	PSY Political Psychology	147
22	WEU Western Europe	144
16	PDV Political Development	143
23	CNF Conflict Processes	141
59	WOM Women and Politics	138
11	DEV Developing Nations	129
3	PRE Presidency	128
56	REL Religion and Politics	128
57	SMO Social Movements	127
4	STA State Politics	120
5	AIS Advanced Industrial Societies	119
63	CNS Constitutional Law and Theory	117
13	EUN European Union	114
58	URB Urban Politics	113
19	SAM South America	112
32	FEM Feminist Theory	112
46	LEG Legislative Studies	110
65	JUD Judicial Politics	109
60	BUR Bureaucracy and Organizational Behavior	103
76	SOW Social Welfare Policy	99
39	ELS Electoral Systems	95
62	CIV Civil Rights and Liberties	93
12	EAS N.E. Asia	90

42	GEN Gender Politics and Policy	86
35	PPT Positive Political Theory	76
68	ENV Environmental Policy	67
18	PSR Post Soviet Region	66
14	MEA Middle East	65
29	ECP Economic Policy	60
17	PCE East & Central Europe	57
49	LIT Literature and Politics	57
6	AFR Africa	54
24	DEF Defense	51
75	SCI Science and Technology	47
36	AFP African American Politics	46
72	MM Immigration Policy	43
15	NAM North America	40
44	LAP Latino(a) Politics	38
66	EDU Education Policy	38
41	EXE Executive Politics	35
47	LGP Lesbian and Gay Politics	34
70	HEL Health Care Policy	34
21	SEA Southeast Asia	31
73	LAB Labor Policy	27
20	SAA South Asia	26
74	REG Regulatory Policy	21
64	CRI Criminal Justice	20
77	TRA Trade Policy	19
45	LEA Leadership Studies	19
61	PFB Public Finance and Budgeting	18
9	CAM Central America	16
8	CAR Caribbean	11
67	ENG Energy Policy	10
10	CAS Central Asia	10
50	NAP Native American Politics	9
37	ASP Asian American Politics	8
69	EVA Evaluation Research	6
48	LIF Life Sciences and Politics	5
7	AUS Australia	3
71	HOU Housing Policy	3

Attending the Conference

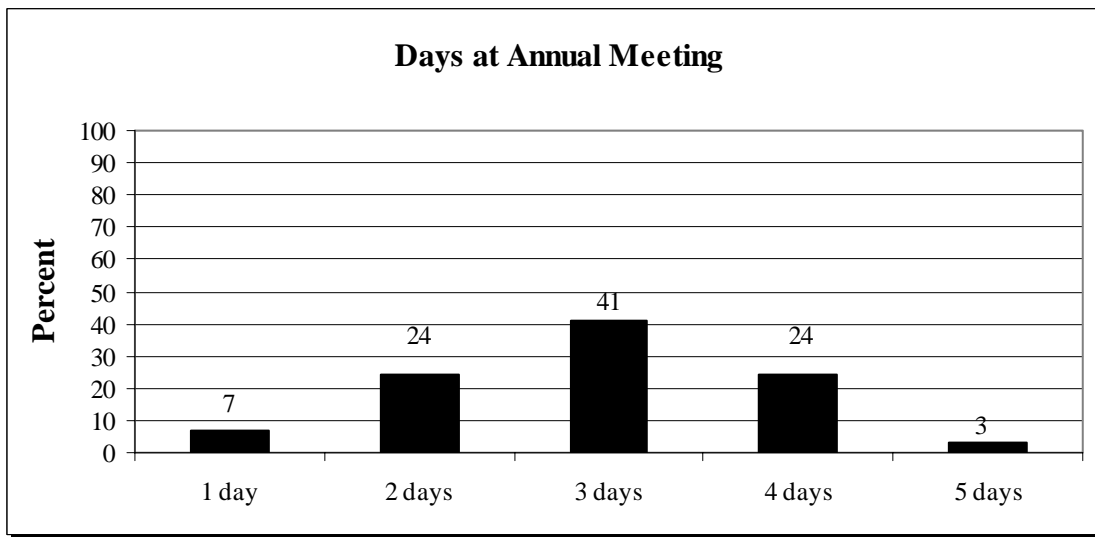
Attendees were first asked how many days they spent in Philadelphia and how many days they spent at the annual meeting. Figure 1 shows the distribution of responses. Four percent of the survey respondents reported living in the Philadelphia area.

Figure 1. How many days did you spend in Philadelphia during the APSA meeting?



The modal number of days respondents reported attending the annual meeting was 3, checked by 41 percent of the respondents (Figure 2).

Figure 2. How many days did you attend the annual meeting?



Decision to Attend the Annual Meeting

The timing of the decision to attend the annual meeting centered on two categories of responses. Participants tended either to make participation a routine event and responded that they almost always attend (39 percent) or they reported that they decided to attend when they learned they would have a role in the program (38 percent) (Table 3).

Table 3. When did you decide to attend the annual meeting?

Time	Percent	Number
I almost always attend	39	971
I decided to attend when I learned I would have a role on the program	38	951
I decided to attend BEFORE I learned whether I would have a role on the program	6	148
I decided to attend SOMETIME AFTER I learned whether I would have a role	5	126
I decided to attend after receiving the preliminary program	4	90
I decided to attend at a later time	7	176

Staying at the Conference Hotel

Two-thirds of the respondents stayed at a conference hotel. Ninety-six percent of responding participants who stayed at a conference hotel rated it as either good or excellent.

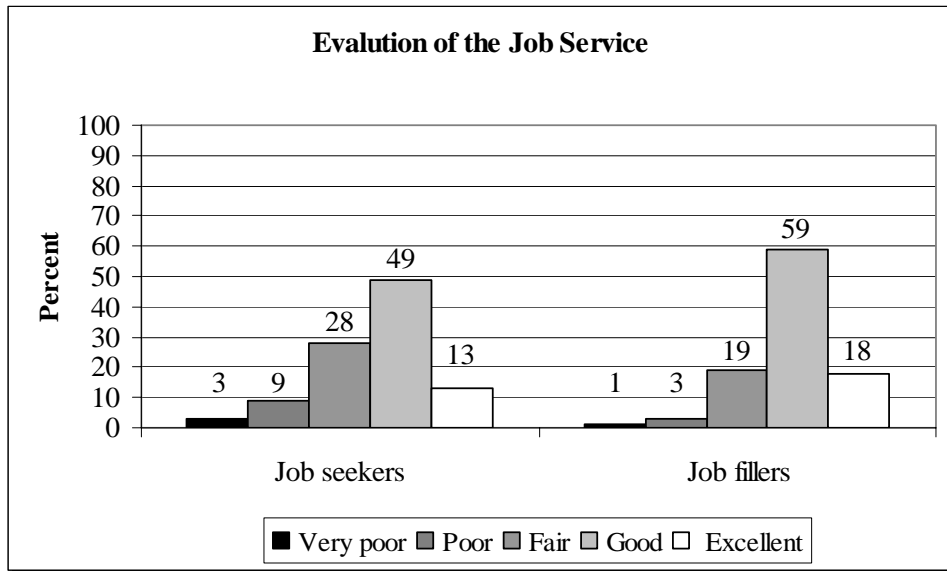
The Day Care Center

Thirty-three of the respondents reported using the day care services provided by the APSA at the conference hotel. Over one-half, 18 of these individuals rated the service as excellent, while nine rated it as good. Five individuals rated it as fair and one individual said it was poor.

The Job Service

Two hundred respondents reported using the job service to look for a position and 145 individuals reported using it to fill a position and evaluated the service. The majority of both job seekers and job fillers rated the service positively (Figure 3). However, there were relatively few users who gave the job service an “excellent” rating. Just 18% of those filling jobs and 13% of those seeking jobs said this.

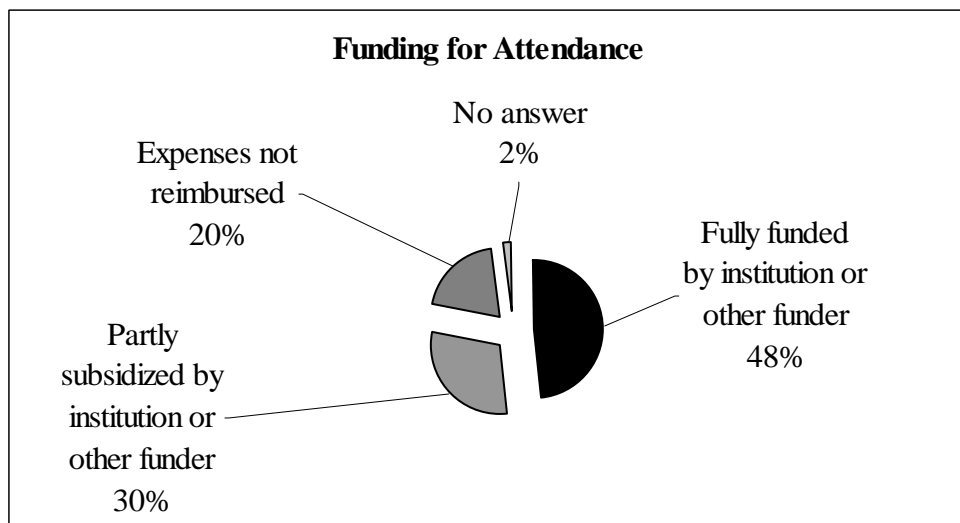
Figure 3. Rating of the Job Service



Financial Support for Attendance

Nearly one-half of the respondent attendees had been fully funded by their institution or other funder. Only 20 percent reported not having any expenses reimbursed (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Were your travel expenses:

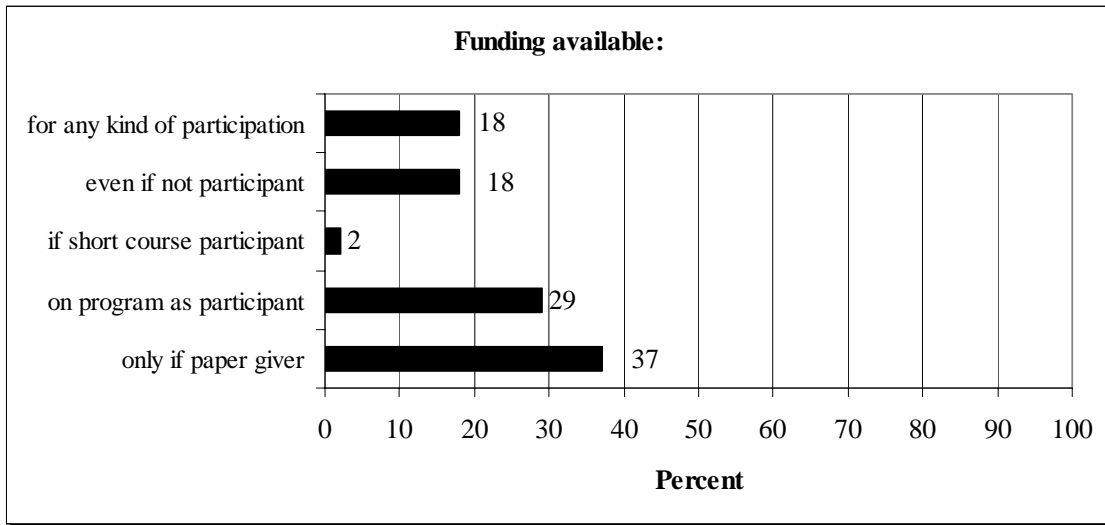


Funding appears to matter a great deal in determining whether or not someone attends the meeting, and half of those receiving funding claim they would not attend without it. . When

asked whether they would have attended if their expenses had not been covered at least in part. forty-nine percent said “yes” they would still have attended while 51 percent said “no.”

Eighteen percent of the institutions provided funding even if the attendee was not on the program and an additional 18 percent could receive funding for any type of participation. At the opposite end, 37 percent reported that they would receive funding only if they were a paper presenter (Figure 5).

Figure 5. What is your institution’s policy for reimbursement for attendance?



Participation in the Annual Meeting: What Matters

Table 4 presents the percent and number of respondents who checked each of 13 different ways of participating in the annual meeting. .

- The majority of the attendees (54%) reported having presented a paper at the 2006 annual meeting.
- Subgroups matter to attendees. They are six times as likely to report attending a subgroup’s business meeting (31%) as to say they attended the APSA business meeting (4%). 17% said they attended an affiliated group’s committee meeting.

Table 4. At the 2006 meeting, did you:		
Activity	Percent	Number
Present a paper	54	1355
Attend a sub-group's business meeting	31	776
Serve as a discussant	18	457
Attend a poster session	18	444
Attend an affiliated group's committee meeting	17	429
Chair a session	14	349
Attend the presidential address	8	204
Present a poster session	7	168
Participate in an Annual Meeting Work Group	7	161
Attend a short course	6	142
Attend the APSA business meeting	5	121
Participate in a short course	4	104
Participate as an exhibitor	.2	5

Nearly three quarters (72%) have been a paper presenter at some time in the past. Nearly half (45%) have been discussants, and 41% have served as chairs.

Participants were also presented with 13 factors that might have been important to them for attending the conference and asked to rate each factor's importance. Learning about new research, seeing friends and making contacts, working with people in their subfield and hearing discussions about their subfield were very important or important to the largest numbers of respondents (Table 5).

Table 5. How important were each of these reasons for your attendance at the APSA conference?

Reasons	Very important	Important	Not important	Not important at all
To learn about new research	53%	39%	4%	1%
To see friends	48	37	9	3
To find a book publisher	11	34	35	16
To find a job or fill a job	10	20	29	36
To make contacts	33	50	9	4
To be involved in professional governance	6	23	39	27
To work with people in my subfield	27	52	12	5
To gain new insights into teaching	6	24	40	24
To hear discussions about my subfield	40	50	5	2
To hear discussions about the discipline	23	50	18	6
To hear discussions about politics	13	35	31	16
To travel to the conference city	6	30	37	23
To add participation to my vita	13	32	26	26

Respondents believed the meeting met their needs either very or somewhat well. Only when it came to finding or filling a job did more than a third of those who felt this was very important think the meeting fell short of meeting their needs (See Table 6).

Table 6. How did the APSA meet your needs for each of following items (AMONG THOSE WHO RATED EACH FACTOR AS A “VERY IMPORTANT” REASON FOR ATTENDING)

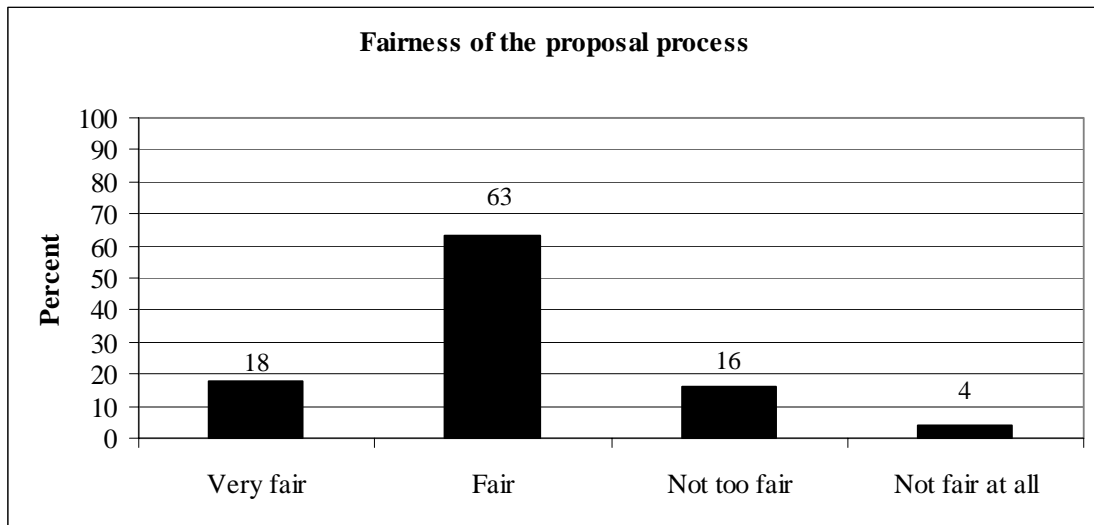
Reasons	Very well	Somewhat well	Not too well/not well
To learn about new research	42%	51	7
To see friends	74%	24	2
To find a book publisher	56%	26	18
To find a job or fill a job	28%	33	39
To make contacts	41%	49	10
To be involved in professional governance	62%	24	14
To work with people in my subfield	46%	41	13
To gain new insights into teaching	34%	46	20
To hear discussions about my subfield	45%	45	10
To hear discussions about the discipline	46%	44	10
To hear discussions about politics	46%	38	16

Paper and Panel Proposals

Sixty-seven percent of attendees reported having submitted a paper proposal, a panel proposal, or both for presentation at the annual meeting. Of those attendees who submitted a proposal, 88% reported having it accepted.

- Respondents who had participated in the proposal process tended to rate it as fair (Figure 6). We should keep in mind that the vast majority of these respondents had had their paper accepted. Those who did not receive an acceptance were about as likely to say the process was NOT fair as to think it was fair.

Figure 6. How would you rate the fairness of the proposal process?



Proposal Deadlines

- Sixty percent of the respondents felt the deadline for proposals was too early while 38 percent believed it was not too early.

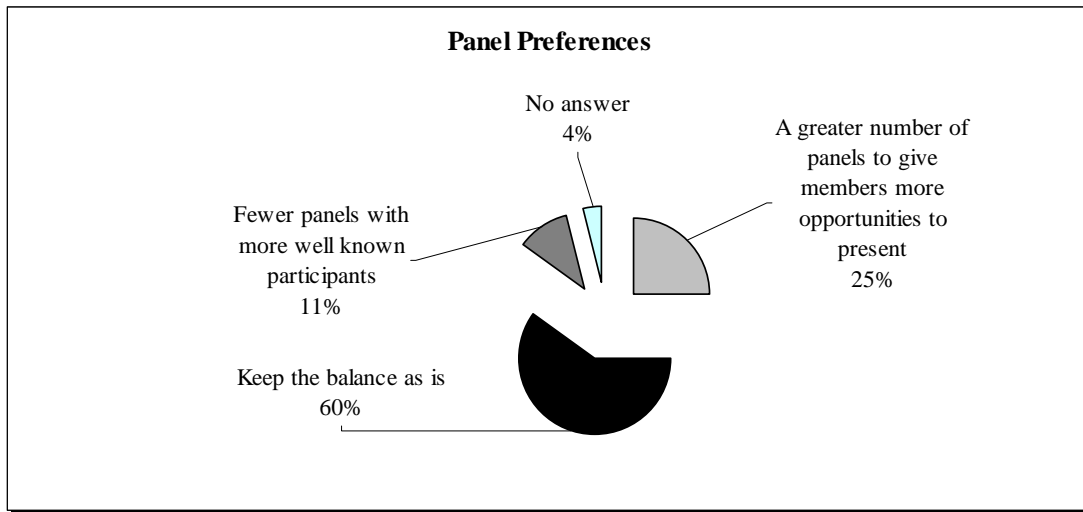
However, when resented with the option of setting the deadline for proposals later but requiring full papers at submission, a substantial majority of respondents opposed this idea; 64 percent either opposed or strongly opposed it

Configuration of Panels

Attendees tended to opt for the status quo when asked whether there should be a greater number of panels to give members more opportunities present, there should be fewer panels with more well known participants or the balance should be kept as it is. (Figure 7).

- A majority of respondents (60%) believe the current balance of panels should be kept rather than increasing or decreasing their number.

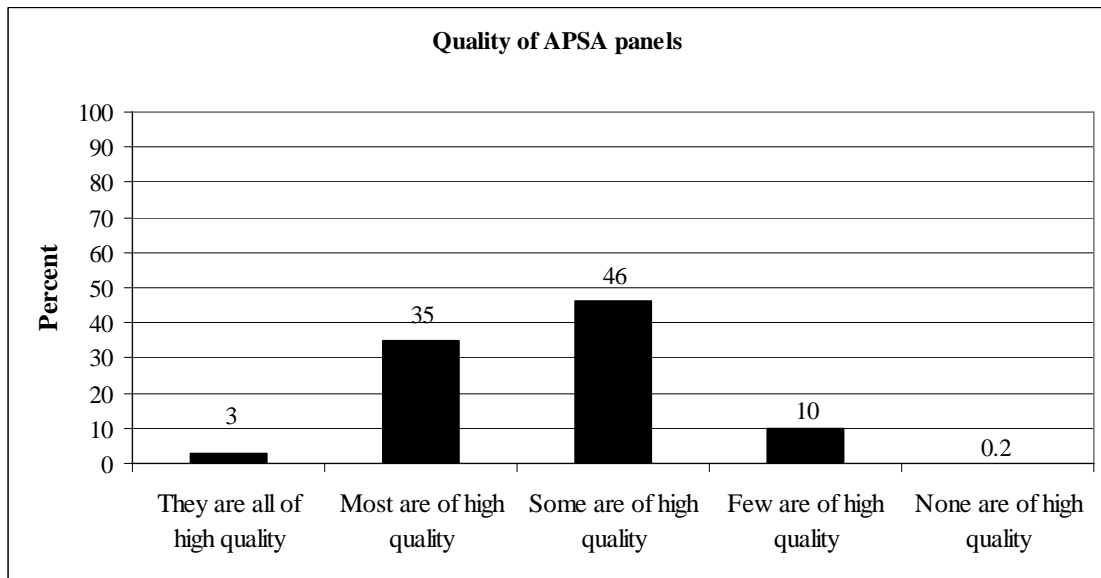
Figure 7. If you had to choose would you prefer:



Evaluations of the Conference: Rating the Panels

Respondents were more positive than negative in their rating of the quality of the APSA panels at the 2006 meeting. But the modal response was that only “some [papers] are of high quality” checked by 46 percent (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Based on your direct experience in attending panels at the 2006 meeting, how would you rate the quality of the APSA panels?



There was also more positive than negative assessment when attendees were asked to rate the annual meeting on a number of dimensions: its size and the number and quality of the panels and poster presentations. Although one in three attendees thought the meetings were too big, 63%

were comfortable with the existing size. And small majorities believed the number of panels and poster sessions were about right. Just as hardly any attendees thought the meetings were too small, attendees were about twice as likely to say there were too many panels as to say there were too few. And although few attendees described the panels and poster session as “excellent,” three in four did rank them as having “good” quality. (Figures 9-11)

Figure 9. Please rate the annual meeting on each of these scales: size

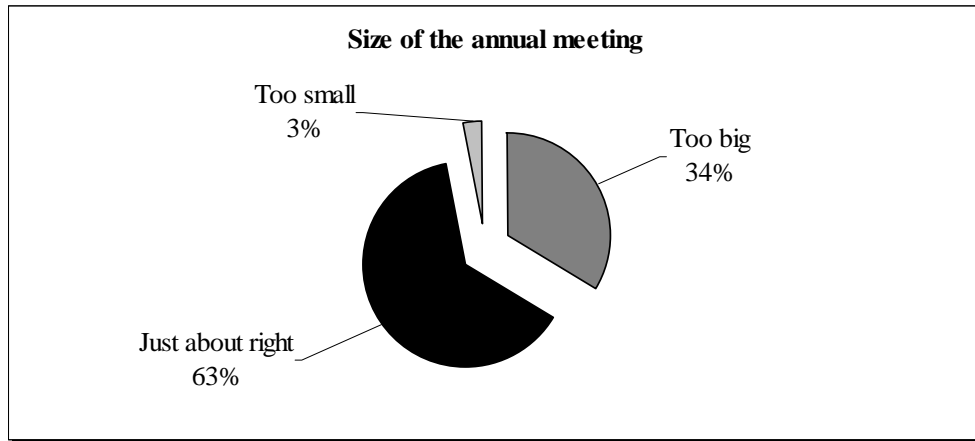


Figure 10. Number of Panels and Posters

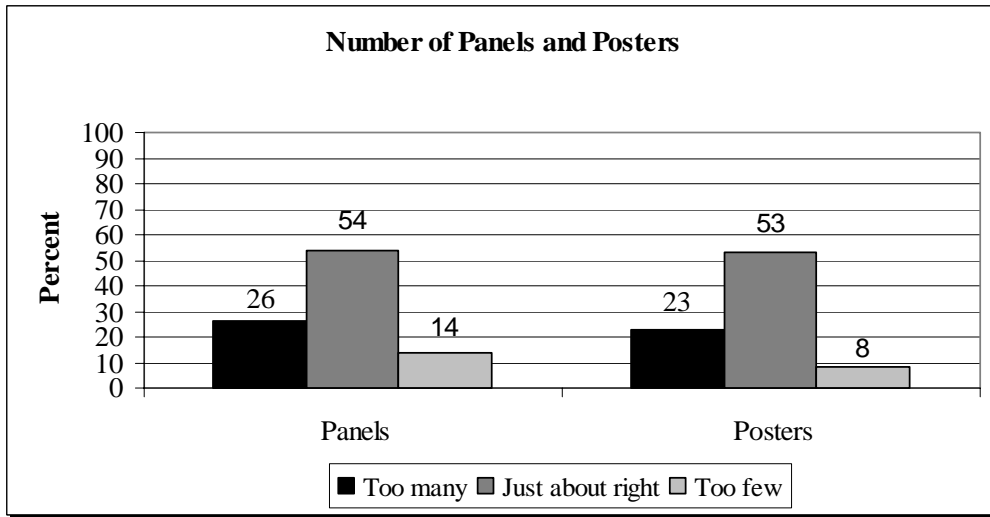
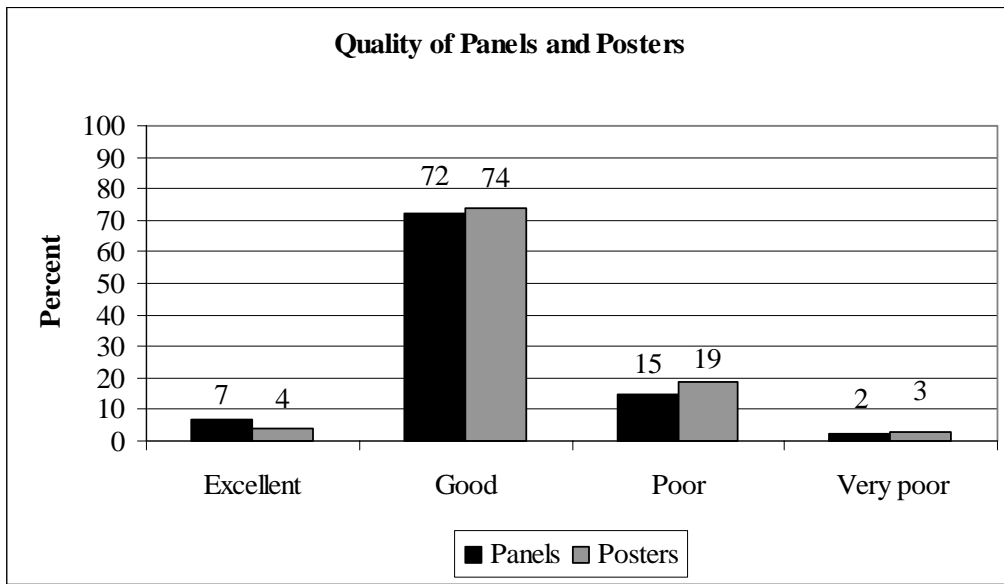


Figure 11. Quality of Panels and Posters



Among the respondents who had presented papers, 65 percent said they posted their paper on the proceeding website. Annual meeting participants tended to believe that paper givers should be required to post their papers on the Proceedings sit.

- Fifty-two percent of the respondents believed that paper givers should be required to post their papers on the proceedings site before the meeting while 30 percent thought that they should not be required to do so.
- At the same time, 65 percent believed that participants should be required to post their papers on the proceedings site after the meeting while 19 percent thought that they should not be required to do so.
- Respondents tended to feel that paper presenters should not be penalized if they did not post their papers on Proceedings. Forty-four percent opposed a penalty while 33 percent supported it. The penalty mentioned in the question may seem too strong to many attendees: being kept from presenting a paper the following year.

Among those who have presented a paper at an earlier conference 21 percent had had their paper published and another 39 percent had their paper under review for publication. The assessment of the APSA panel discussion was generally positive, but not too much so – only 15% rated the discussion as “very helpful” in guiding their revision.

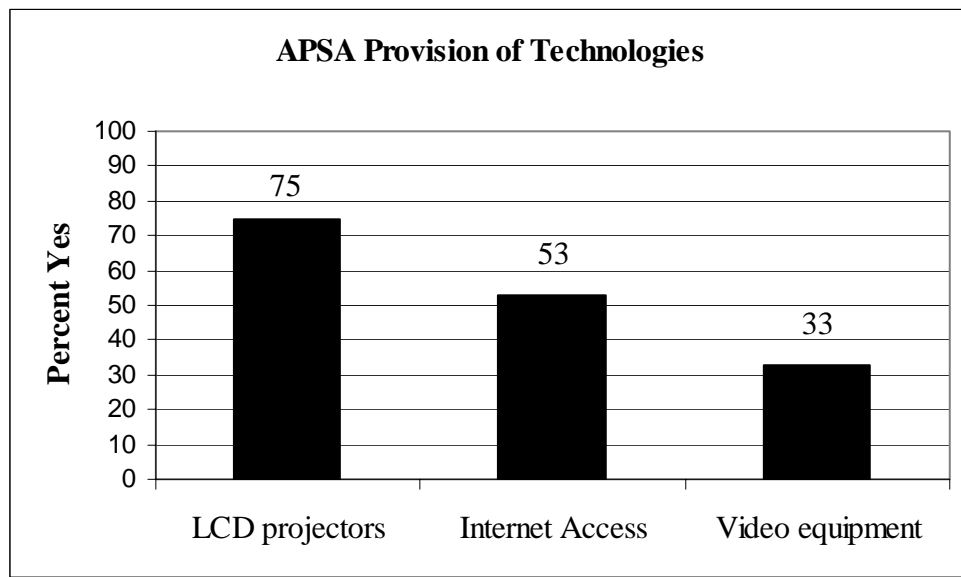
Many paper presenters expect publication:

- Nearly three-quarters of the respondents said that they expected to publish papers that they presented at APSA annual meetings.
- 82 percent favored APSA taking steps to publicize research presented at the annual meeting to journalists and 80 percent agreed to be interviewed by journalists if such a request were made of them at an annual meeting.

Technologies

Three-quarters of the respondents wanted APSA to provide LCD projectors for paper presentations, while 53 percent wanted Internet access. Only one-third wanted video equipment to be available (Figure 12).

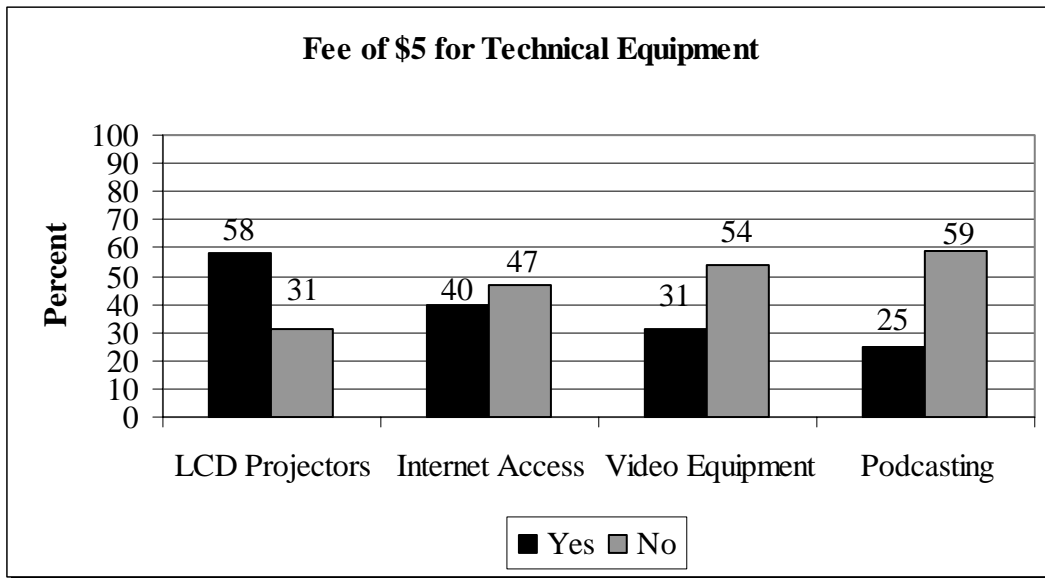
Figure 12. Should APSA provide the following technologies for paper presentations:



A majority of respondents said that they would be willing to impose an additional fee of \$5 to allow the use of LCD projectors (58%), while fewer (40%) would be willing to pay such a fee for access to the Internet. Approximately three in ten would support the imposition of such a fee for video equipment and one-quarter would support the imposition of such a fee for podcasting (Figure 13).

- Respondents were willing to provide their own laptop for powerpoint or other presentations (76%) but few would (or could) provide their own projector for such presentations (6%)

Figure 13. Would you be willing to impose an additional fee of \$5 to allow the use of:



The Book Exhibit

The vast majority of attendees had visited the APSA book exhibit at least once and a substantial majority spent more than an hour at it. Few people thought exhibit hours should be shortened and a substantial minority thought the hours should be lengthened.

- Respondents who visited the book exhibit tended to rate it positively; 87 percent rated it as either good or excellent.
- Only 13 percent of the respondents thought there were vendors missing from the book exhibit.

The Program

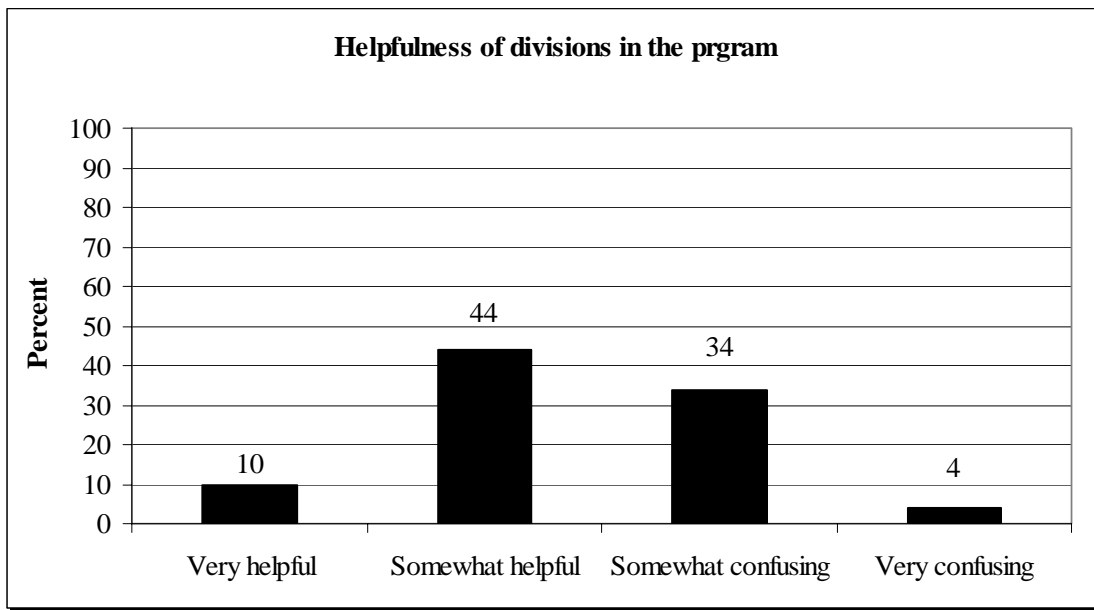
Survey participants were asked a number of questions about the annual meeting program including the timing of its use and an evaluation of the information contained in it.

- Reading the program occurred primarily during the meeting although a substantial minority spent at least one hour reading it before the meeting (Table 7).
- Attendees found it fairly easy to find information about the sessions in the program; 84 percent said it either very or somewhat easy to find information about the session in the program

- A majority found the divisions between the official APSA program and those of related groups to be helpful (54 percent), while 38% believed it was confusing (Figure 14).
- Only 33 percent reported paying much attention to the advertisements in the program

	No time	Less than an hour	1-2 hours	More than 2 hours
Before the meeting	11%	46%	34%	7%
While at the meeting	2	35	48	13
After the meeting	52	32	9	2

Figure 14. The program made divisions between the official APSA program and those of related groups.:



Attending Panels

Respondents were asked how many panels they attended beyond any they were on and the decision making process as to what panels to attend.

- The modal number of panels participants said they attended beyond any panels in which they were members was 3 to 5 panels; 45 percent checked this number while 28 percent a higher number of panels and 23 percent attended fewer (Figure 15). Given the other distributions, it is likely that the median attendance at panels (besides one own) is closer to 3 than to 5.

- 81 percent checked that they attended panels because they were in their area of expertise while nearly 50 percent checked that they attended panels in areas they were interested but not necessarily expert in.
- They tended to select panels to attend by picking topics in the program that interested them or they wanted to hear a particular panelist (Figure 16).

Figure 15. Excluding any panels on which you were a participant, how many panels did you attend?

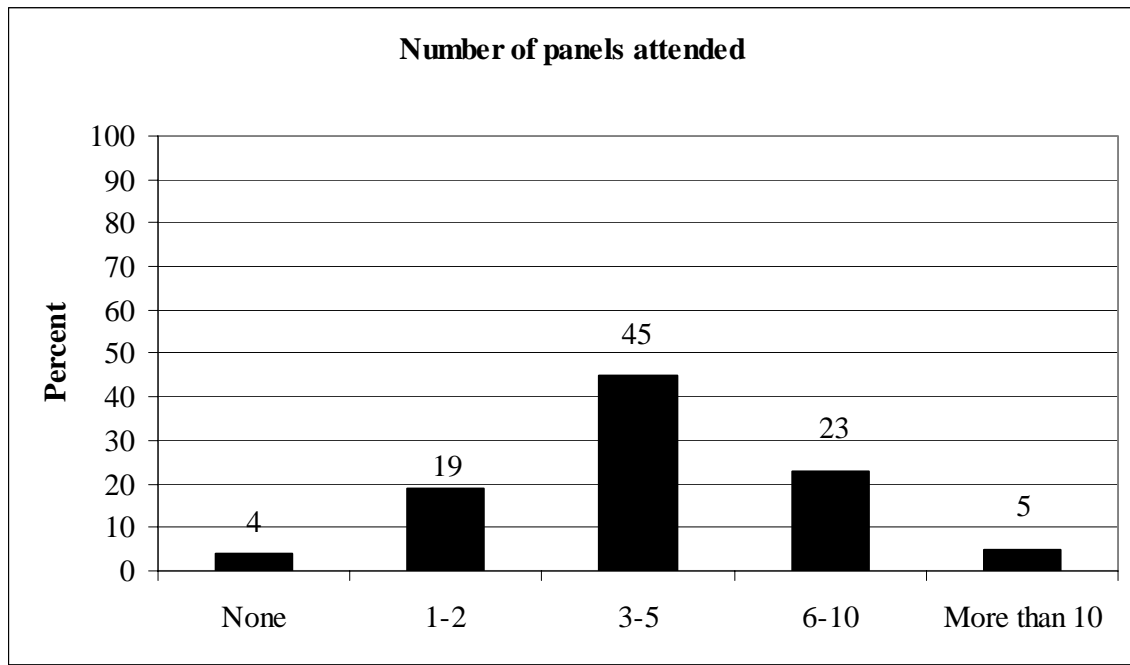
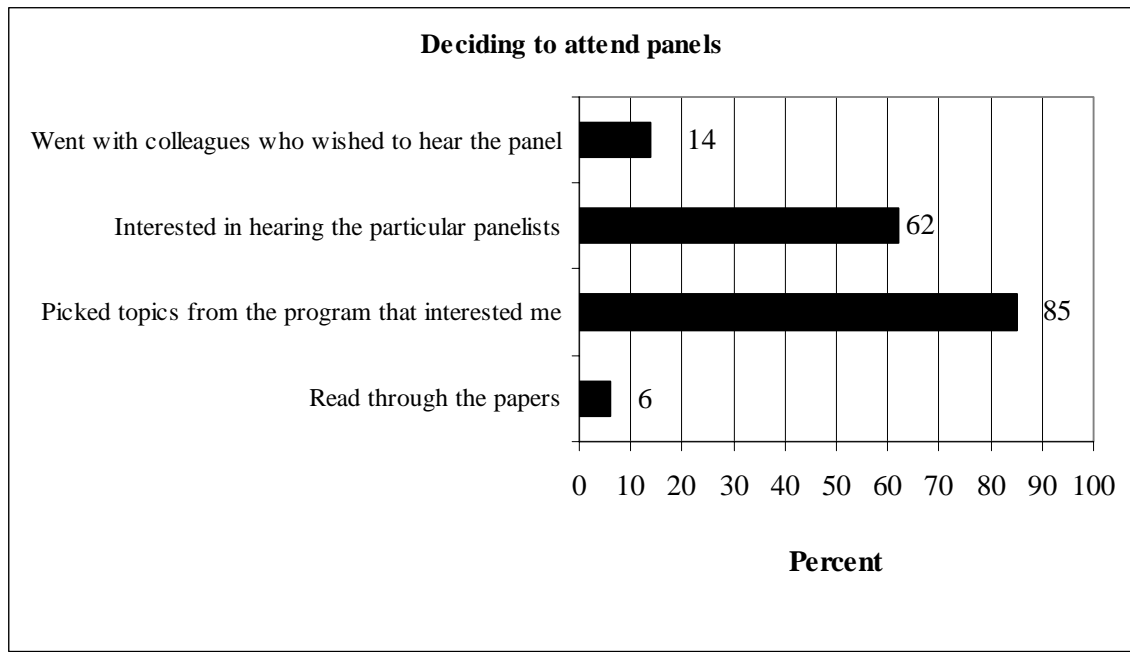


Figure 16. How did you decide which panels to attend?



Respondents were then asked to think about the first and last panels that they attended at the annual meeting in 2006 and to rate the panel on a number of qualities. Only a small subset of respondents answered this set of questions. However, the following tables present the responses of this subset of respondents. Like the overall panel assessments, quality is viewed as good, not excellent, while the visual aids get a more negative assessment.

Table 8. Think about the first panel that you attended at the meeting, how would you rate:

Item	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
The overall quality of the papers	1%	4%	24%	54%	18%
Quality of the discussants	2	6	22	48	23
Room comfort	2	8	31	47	12
Quality of the visual aids	5	13	32	43	7

Table 9. Think about the last panel that you attended at the meeting, how would you rate:

Item	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
The overall quality of the papers	1%	4%	20%	54%	20%
Quality of the discussants	2	5	21	49	23
Room comfort	3	8	30	48	11
Quality of the visual aids	5	12	31	44	7

Conference Papers

How many papers did attendees tend to read outside of any papers they read for a panel they were on and how many papers have they downloaded since the meeting? Before the meeting less than one in three (28%) report having read even one other paper (Figure 16), but nearly 60 percent have downloaded at least one paper since the meeting (Figure 17).

Figure 16. Outside of any papers which you read for a panel for which you were a chair/discussant/paper giver, how many papers did you read before the meeting?

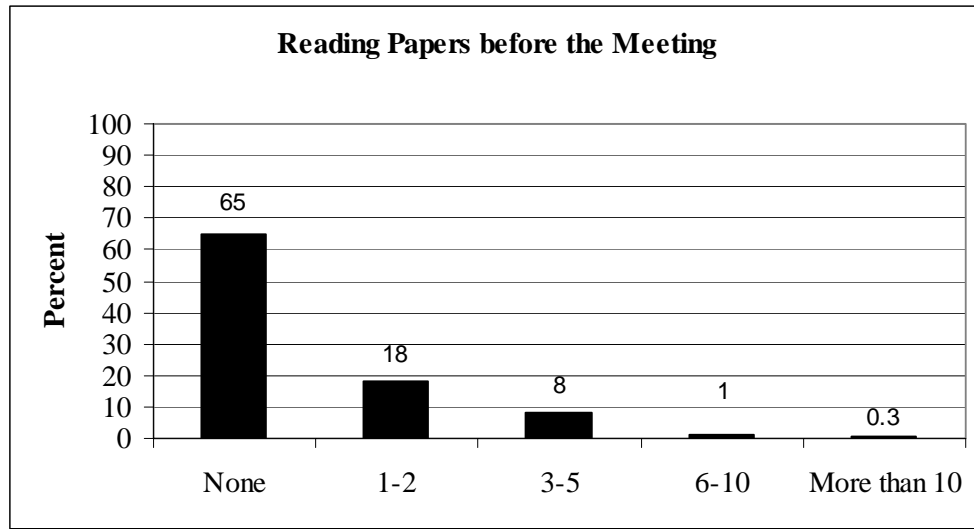
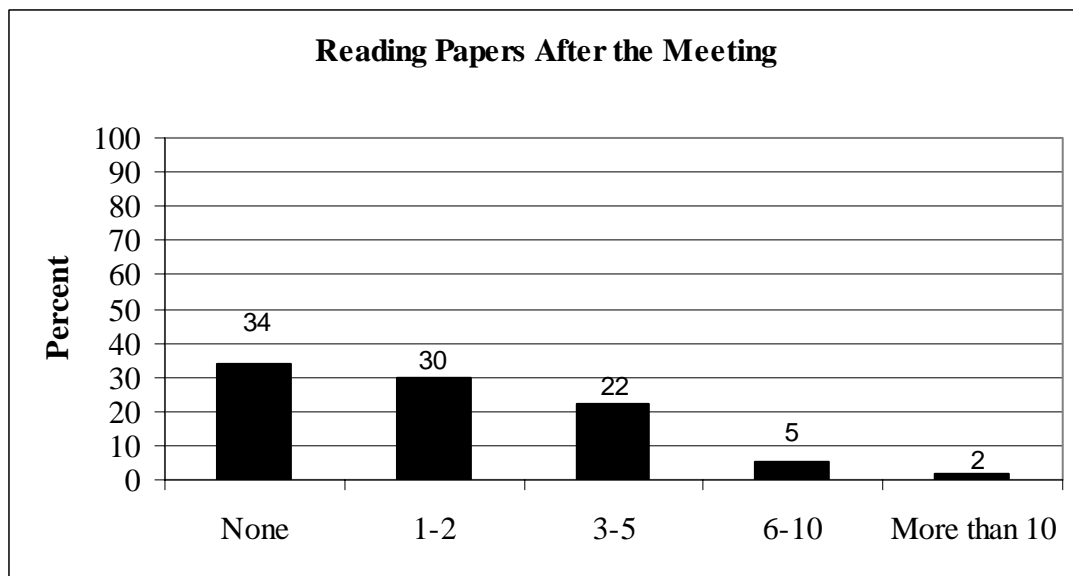


Figure 17. How many papers have you downloaded or read since the meeting?



Reflecting on the Program

Attendees were presented with five statements about different aspects of the program and asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each one. There was general satisfaction with the program – although many attendees still express concern about the timeliness of papers and the size of the panels.

60% agreed that too many papers are finished too late to be adequately discussed. 37% believed that too many papers are not finished and never presented.

But few agreed that there were too many graduate students on the program. 60% believe the program offers enough opportunities for scholars like themselves to present their work and 62% that the program reflects the mix of scholars at different levels of their careers appropriately.

When it came to whether “panels are too large for there to be adequate discussion of the papers,” 43% agreed. Just 31% disagreed. (Table 10).

Table 10. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statement	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
There are too many graduate students on the program at the present time.	6%	15%	27%	23%	22%
The APSA meeting offers enough opportunities for scholars like me to present their work.	17	43	9	18	6
The program reflects the mix of scholars at different levels of their careers appropriately.	14	48	12	15	4
Too many papers are finished too late for them to be adequately discussed.	19	41	19	13	1
Too many papers are not finished and never presented.	11	26	32	19	4
Panels are too large for there to be adequate discussion of the papers.	13	30	19	26	5

Rating Participation in Poster Sessions and Short Courses

A total of 155 people participated in a poster session and evaluated their experience as did 100 people who participated in a short course.

- Participation in poster sessions received mixed reviews; 47 percent thought it was either not at all worthwhile or not too worthwhile while 53 percent thought it was either very or somewhat worthwhile.

Participation in a short course was considered very worthwhile by those who took part in one; 68 percent said it was very worthwhile, while another 24% described it as somewhat worthwhile.

Trends in APSA Annual Meetings

Participants attending the 2006 annual meeting were about evenly divided between individuals who had been attending annual meetings only since 2000, those who began attending between 1990 and 2000 and those who began attending before 1990. Fewer than 5% said their first APSA meeting predated 1980.

But despite the difference in the number of years between first attendance and the 2006 meeting, most attendees rated the quality of a number of aspects of the meetings as not having changed since they began attending the meetings (Figures 18 through 20). And in nearly every case, when people saw a difference, more said things had gotten better than said they had gotten worse. Only when it came to the quality of the paper discussions, did negative assessment outweigh positive ones.

Figure 18. In your opinion, from the time you began attending APSA annual meetings:

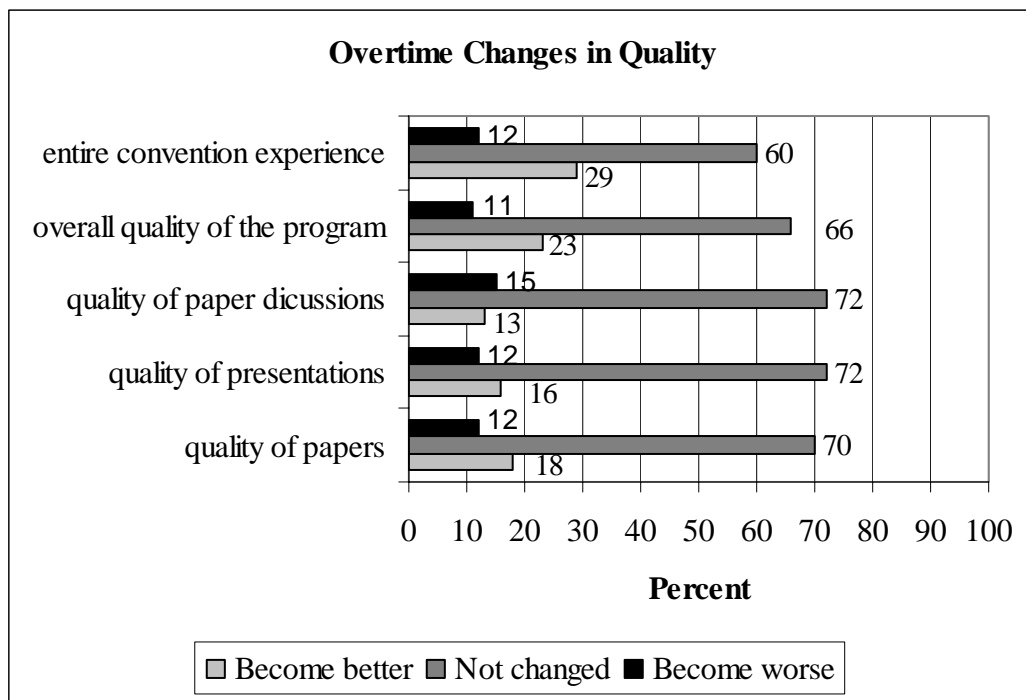


Figure 19. In your opinion, from the time you began attending APSA annual meetings:

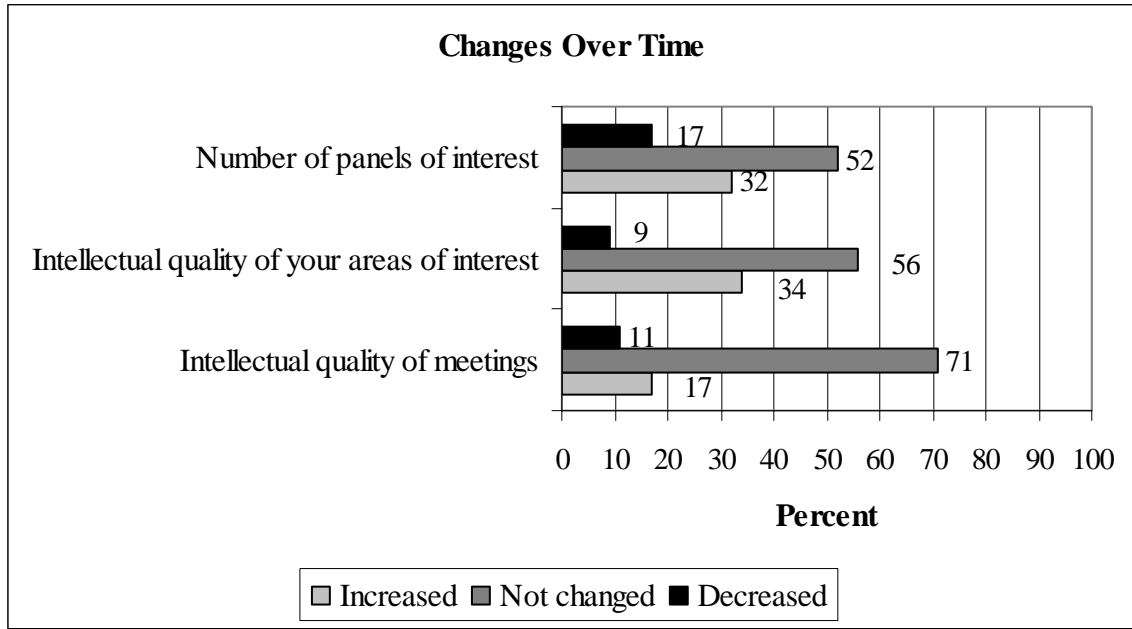
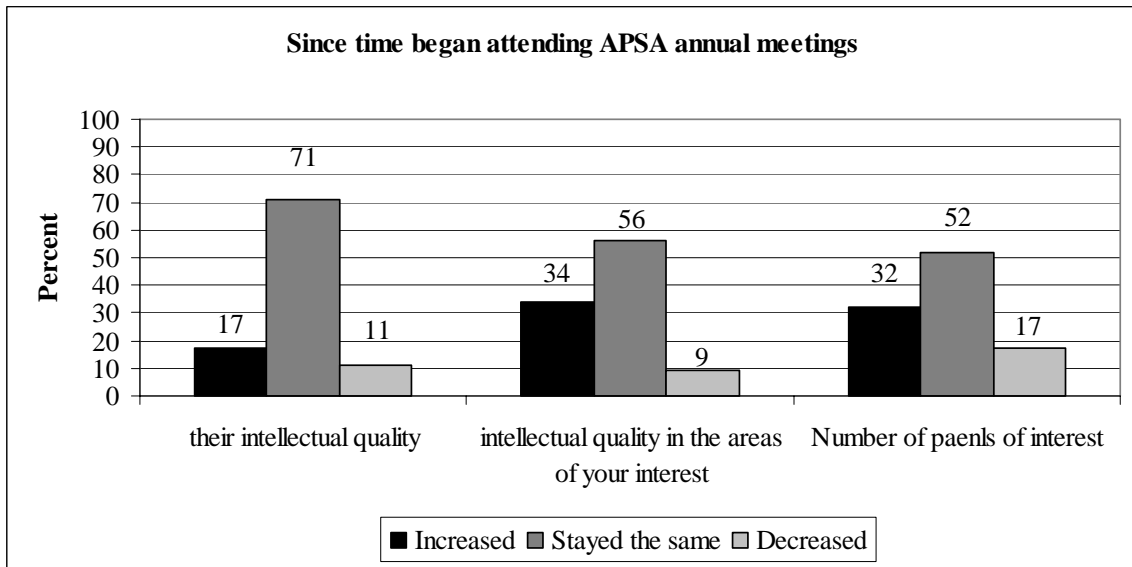


Figure 20. In your opinion, from the time you began attending APSA annual meetings:



Site Changes and Timing Changes

There is interest in taking the annual meeting to San Diego, but no positive consensus on any of four other possible venues. 41 percent said they would be more likely to attend an annual meeting if it were held in San Diego, while only 13% were less likely. Canada had some allure, but while 30% said they would be more likely to attend a meeting in Canada, 19% were less likely. Hawaii, Las Vegas, and Mexico were viewed negatively.

Moving the meeting to late December/early January was a particularly unattractive option for participants at the 2006 meeting. No alternative time of the year received particularly strong approval from attendees (Figures 21 and 22).

- Fifty percent of the respondents reported that they not be willing to pay more if it were held another time of the year while 22 percent that they would be willing to pay more and 19 percent were not sure.

Figure 21. Would you be more or less likely to attend an APSA meeting if it were held in:

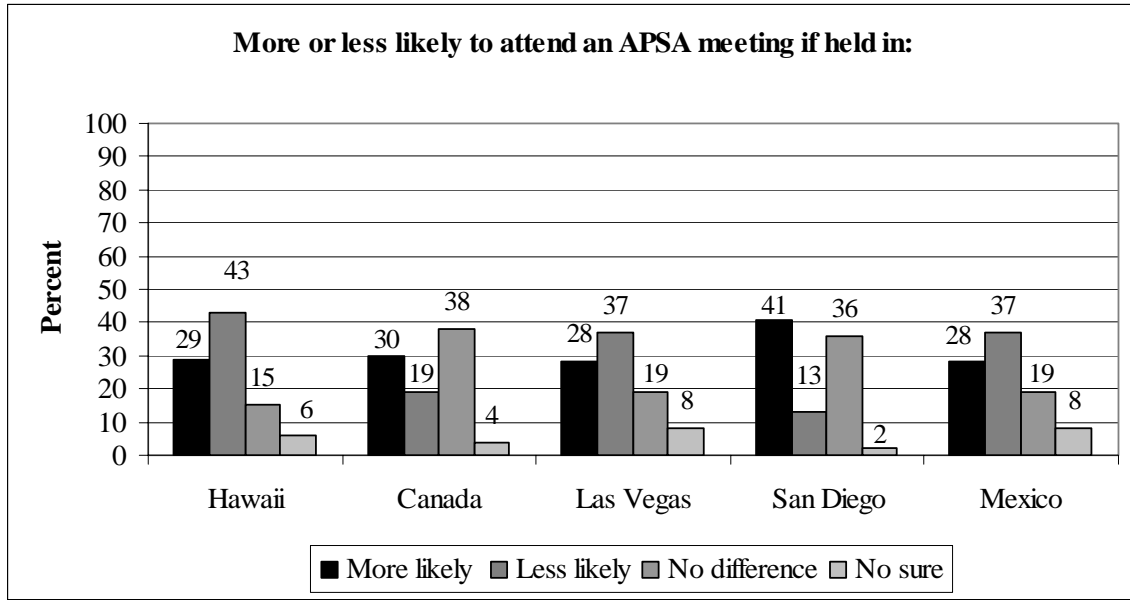
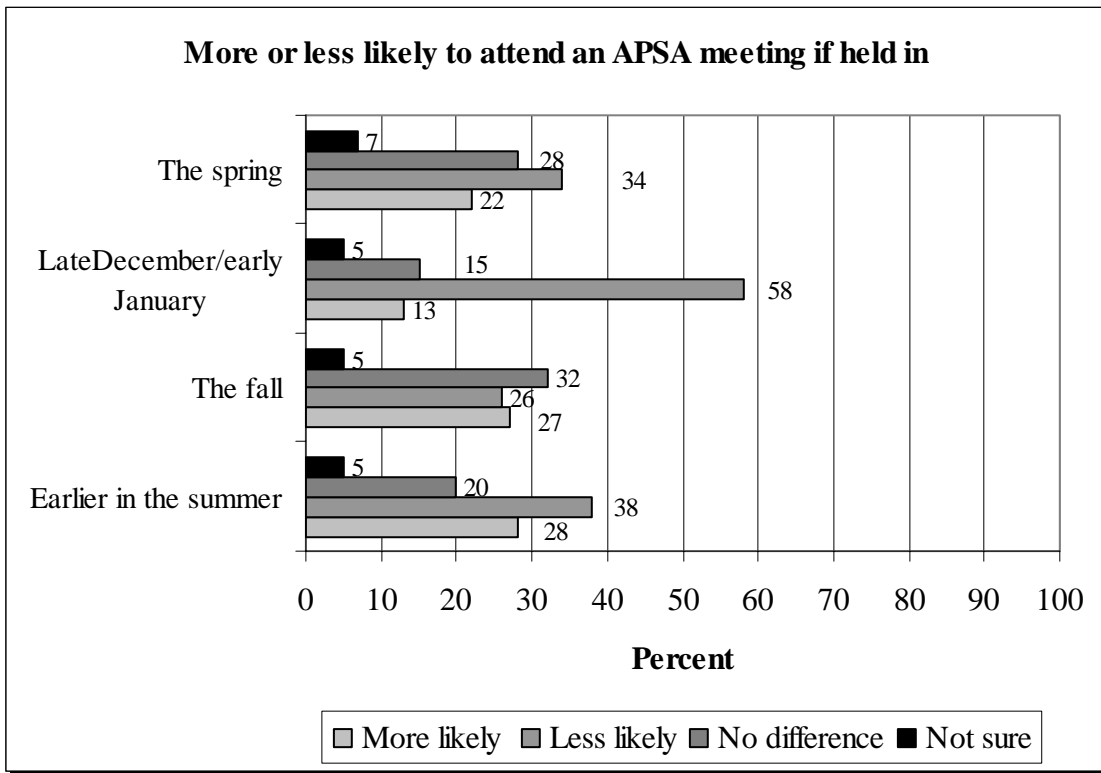


Figure 22. Would you be more or less likely to attend an APSA annual meeting if it were held:



Labor Union Policies

Two questions addressed issues regarding APSA policies toward labor disputes.

- A majority, 57 percent, favored the APSA policy that allows it to withdraw for a contract in the case of a labor dispute.(Figure 21)
- A similar majority of 57 percent, supported the APSA adopting a “union preference policy” meaning that if cost is not an issue it would prefer to use hotels that either have a union or have permitted fair union elections (Figure 22).

Figure 21. APSA currently has language in its contracts to allow us to withdraw from a contract in the case of a labor dispute. Do you favor or oppose this policy?

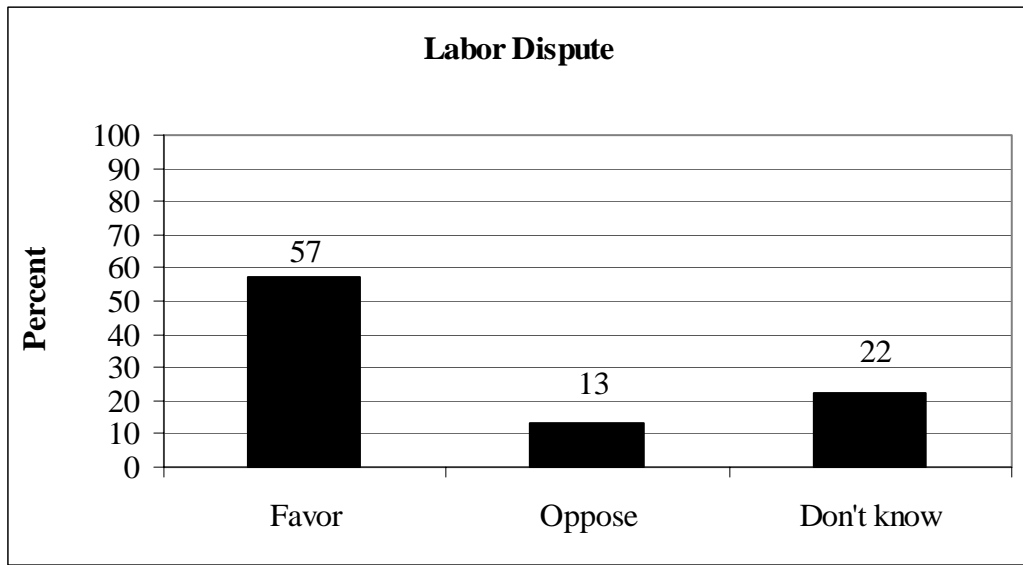
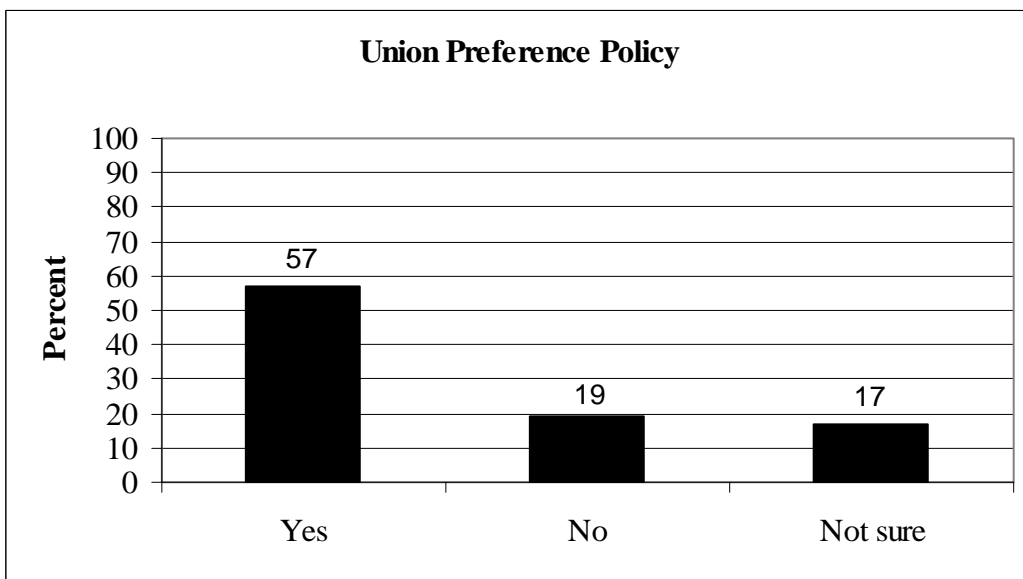


Figure 22. Should APSA adopt a 'union preference' policy, i.e., if cost is not an issue we would prefer to use hotels that either have a union or have permitted fair union elections?



Membership in APSA

The vast majority of annual meeting participants pay their dues and renew their membership every year, 73 percent (Figure 23), and participation in the annual meeting has little or nothing to do with it. But just over one in ten say their membership is dependent on participation.

Figure 23. Which of these statements best describes your membership in APSA

