

FINANCIAL AND NARRATIVE REPORTS

**SEAC MEETING, GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA
NOVEMBER 12-15, 2014**

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Preamble

Following the financial report, we have prepared the narrative overview by topics. These more or less follow the major categories one has to plan around to develop the annual meeting. Each of these topics contains a general overview of how things worked, any obstacles we encountered, and the occasional suggestion. We follow each topical narrative with a section of how-to tips specifically for meeting organizers, e.g., where's a good place to order name tags?

I. By the Numbers: Financial Report

For the 2014 Annual Meeting we had 685 paid registrants and 714 total attendance factoring in volunteers and guests (Table 1). Among paid registrants, we had 238 students, 377 members, and 70 non-members. (note: Cobb originally reported over 300 students at the Business Meeting, but mis-read his numbers). Of the 238 students, fifty were non-members.

The format for the accompanying financial table was provided a few years ago. (Only the two years of 2010 and 2011 were completely filled in on our version, and we have filled in 2012 and 2013 as well as we could). We are passing this on because it is an extremely useful panorama of SEAC meeting expenses past and present. So we re-instituted the form this year and heartily recommend it to future organizers as a planning guide.

This year we made a substantial profit of just shy of \$8,000 (after the return of \$2,000 seed money. The seed money is currently held in the SEAC PayPal account). We did not really cut any corners this year and hoped to plow as much money into the meeting as possible, so were somewhat surprised at the size of the profit. Several factors seem to be at work. First, we charged a base \$90 registration fee for members and \$60 for students, a tad higher than many earlier years, but consistent with 2013 in Tampa. We were concerned that since Greenville was not a major hub that attendance numbers might be lower than years past. We were wrong there, happily. Second, our donations were considerably larger than past meetings. In particular, we had the advantage of drawing on university resources from both South Carolina and Florida to subvent costs. For example, the Savannah River Archaeological Research Program covered the bulletin costs and the Florida Museum of Natural History covered about one-fourth of the Thursday reception. In addition, the Student Affairs Committee did a great job of soliciting from CRM firms to assist with their events. Finally, we got a rebate on the original AV estimate (see section III below), and when we double-checked the final bill from the hotel it looks like they knocked off a couple of more thousand dollars off of that rebate.

At future meetings we may want to find a way to prompt non-members to join at the meeting itself. For example, we could allow them to register at the cheaper conference rate if they join SEAC for the subsequent year at the same time.

Note to Organizers:

In Table 1, the Lexington, KY organizers note that they did not get dunned by the hotel even though they did not appear to meet their room number threshold. Please note that there is a distinction between the total number of rooms the hotel holds in escrow at the conference rates (these are the room block numbers on the table) and the number of rooms required to make sure organizers don't have to pay for the breakout rooms used for symposia presentations. The latter is typically a percentage of the former (and will be stated in the hotel contract). For example, for Greenville we needed to have 75 percent of our total room block rented (about 581

rooms) to make sure our meeting rooms were free. This is presumably where the confusion arose on the part of the Kentucky organizers: they probably did achieve the required minimum percentage of their total room block. So don't panic if you do not reach your entire allotment. However, keep in mind that the more rooms reserved, the more free nights you will get in return to apportion among Board members.

In the Miscellaneous category you will note significant sums for all meetings through the years. There are a lot of small costs that add up, so build in a couple of thousand dollars in this category as you develop your budget. We learned from previous organizers that it is a good idea to tip very liberally throughout the hotel, and you will receive hundreds of dollars in cash in on-site registration that are useful for this purpose. There are really too many things to list that will arise in this category; for example, we paid for a pizza party to entice students to help stuff registration packets the Sunday before the meeting. Don't feel like you have to pay out of pocket for anything, the meeting costs should cover everything large and small.

Numerous people still prefer to register with checks so be prepared to provide an on-line PDF form for people to mail hard copies of their registration paperwork. Bring hard copies of the form to the meeting itself for the same purpose. The practice of check-writing will likely continue for a number of years. Many Federal and state agencies, for instance, have no way to make online payments to PayPal or through credit card companies (at least that they're willing to use) and will cut checks for their employees instead. So when you set up your SEAC bank account, it will be handy if that institution is within easy check-depositing distance.

Our non-paid "Guest" category included special cases of individuals requesting to attend a session (or members making requests on their behalf) without paying for registration. For example, NPS archaeologists who had organized a session requested that we allow two high-ranking NPS administrators and a reporter be provided badges for the day of that session. Very worthwhile waivers in our estimation.

Table 1. Recent History of SEAC Annual Meeting Registration and Finances

BASIC INFORMATION	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Organizer/Point of Contact	George Crothers	Ken Sassaman	Rich Weinstein	Nancy White	Charlie Cobb
City	Lexington, KY	Jacksonville, FL	Baton Rouge, LA	Tampa, FL	Greenville, SC
Hotel	Hilton	Hyatt	Hilton	The Westin	Hyatt
Dates	Oct. 27-30	Nov. 2-6	Nov. 7-10	Nov. 6-9	Nov. 12-15

FINANCIALS	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Income					
Pre-Registration	\$ 35,365.00	\$ 29,620.00	\$ 33,167.48	\$ 41,290.00	\$ 51,295.00
On-Site Registration	\$ 9,470.00	\$ 7,150.00	\$ 9,560.00	\$ 10,875.00	\$ 5,005.00
Book Room Tables			-	\$ 950.00	\$ 1,065.00
SCARNG luncheon	-	-	-	-	\$ 577.81
Saturday dinner			included	included	\$ 3,492.00
Excursion Ticket Sales	\$ 4,080.00	\$ 6,125.00	included	included	-
Venue Incentives	-	\$ 3,800.00	-	-	-
Advertisements	-	\$ 1,200.00	-	\$ 2,900.00	\$ 1,300.00
Donations	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,795.33	\$ 8,102.80	\$ 8,697.00	\$ 14,137.00
SEAC Seed Money	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 53,415.00	\$ 52,690.33	\$ 52,830.28	\$ 66,712.00	\$ 78,871.81
Expenses					
Liability Insurance	-	-	-	-	\$ 170.58
Book Room Tables			\$ 981.00	-	\$ 1,190.00
Hotel Catering	\$ 8,399.90	\$ 10,159.71	\$ 10,026.96	\$ 12,587.00	\$ 25,066.58
AV	\$ 7,228.16	\$ 6,847.60	\$ 7,805.25	\$ 5,653.00	\$ 7,449.40
Bulletin & Guide Printing	\$ 4,467.00	\$ 1,895.33	\$ 6,702.80	\$ 4,358.00	\$ 5,793.40
Poster Boards	\$ 675.00	\$ 1,241.20	\$ 300.00	\$ 510.00	\$ 922.25
Dance Band	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,645.00	\$ 2,900.00
Reception Venue Rental	-	\$ 1,800.75	-	-	\$ 2,600.00
Reception Catering	\$ 11,656.00	\$ 10,688.96	\$ 12,384.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 13,687.80
Reception Shuttle			-	-	\$ 330.00
SAC Luncheon			\$ 718.80	-	\$ 1,584.17
SCARNG Luncheon	-	-	-	-	\$ 577.81
Hotel/Meeting Rooms			\$ 3,297.25	\$ 300.00	\$ 1,110.29
Name Tags (print & sort)	-	-	-	-	\$ 1,191.06
Excursion Venue Rental	\$ 1,426.63	-	-	-	-
Excursion Catering	\$ 2,354.63	\$ 3,587.77	\$ 60.50	\$ 516.00	-
Excursion Transportation	\$ 1,249.53	\$ 2,980.00	\$ 1,382.60	\$ 756.00	\$ 550.00
Excursion Speaker Fee			-	-	\$ 150.00
Saturday Dinner Catering			\$ 900.00	\$ 2,885.00	included
Saturday Dinner Venue			\$ 2,727.73	\$ 1,100.00	included
Field Day Park Rental	-	-	-	-	\$ 445.00
Baby Sitting Services	-	-	-	-	\$ 395.00
PayPal fees			-	\$ 1,190.00	\$ 1,197.00
Return of Seed Money	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Misc.	\$ 7,098.19	\$ 1,555.11	\$ 1,749.92	\$ 11,180.00	\$ 1,721.90
TOTAL	\$ 49,055.04	\$ 45,756.43	\$ 54,536.81	\$ 58,680.00	\$ 71,032.24
<i>Balance</i>	\$ 4,039.96	\$ 6,933.90	\$ (1,706.53)	\$ 8,032.00	\$ 7,839.57

ROOM BLOCKS	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Contracted	*see note*				
Wed	200	200	175	125	175
Thurs	275	250	210	240	250
Fri	275	250	210	240	250
Sat	175	100	100	125	100
Total	925	800	695	730	775
Reserved (or Actual) est.					
Wed	200	222			189
Thurs	239	254			232
Fri	229	244			229
Sat	80	116			98
Total	748	836			748
Difference					
Wed	0	22			14
Thurs	-36	4			-18
Fri	-46	-6			-21
Sat	-95	16			-7
Total	-177	36			-32

*"The hotel ran out of rooms in our block and we increased the block a couple of times, but their numbers seem to indicate that we did not meet the room reservations. If we didn't, we certainly didn't incur any penalties." GC

REGISTRATION COSTS	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Pre-Registration					
Regular Member	\$ 70.00	\$ 65.00	\$ 65.00	\$ 90.00	\$ 90.00
Student Member	\$ 50.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00
Student Non-Member				\$ 70.00	\$ 70.00
Non-Member	\$ 80.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 105.00	\$ 105.00
Volunteer	FREE	FREE		FREE	FREE
Guest	FREE	FREE		FREE	FREE
On-Site Registration					
Regular Member	\$ 90.00	\$ 80.00	\$ 80.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Student Member	\$ 70.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 70.00	\$ 70.00
Student Non-Member				\$ 80.00	\$ 80.00
Non-Member	\$ 100.00	\$ 90.00	\$ 90.00	\$ 115.00	\$ 115.00
Guest	FREE	FREE		FREE	FREE
REGISTRATION COUNTS	2010	2011	2012	2013	2013
Tours	120	175			25
Pre-Registration					
Regular Member	283	248			350
Student Member	207	210			174
Student Non-Member					40
Non-Member	61	54			55
Volunteer	54	16			23
Guest	14	-			3
Total	619	528			645
On-Site Registration					
Regular Member	34	20			27
Student Member	53	40			14
Student Non-Member					10
Non-Member	27	35			15
Guest	2	10			3
Total	116	105			69
Total Paid Registrants*					685
GRAND TOTAL**	735	633			714

*excludes volunteers and guests; ** includes volunteers and guests

II. Registration System

The online registration system worked well this year, kudos to the web team. This allowed for rapid aggregation of abstracts and sorting of data. Because dinner reservations, tour reservations, etc. also went into the registration process, it was very easy to pull out people (and contact information) associated with specific events to provide updates to them specifically. We also had table reservations for bookroom vendors built into the system, and that worked well.

As another bonus, the online registration can be used for on-site registration with credit cards (a traditional bottleneck), so bringing an extra laptop for that purpose paid big time dividends. Just be sure on the Wednesday of meeting week to upgrade the system so that people have to register at the on-site rates. This year, people could register through Tuesday of meeting week at the regular registration rates. Organizers may want to consider moving the late-registration date back (as most conferences do) because it give you a better sense of the registration numbers and dollars that you may anticipate earlier on (and thus allow for commitment of additional funds to coffee and other amenities).

After some debate among the Board and ourselves, we adopted the SAA presentation rule: one could be senior author on only one paper, but could be a co-author on multiple papers. While this added some time and energy in terms of expanding the author glossary in the bulletin, it does not seem to have been onerous.

Because the online system required membership in order to submit abstracts, we did not experience the problems of years past where paper presenters never followed through on joining SEAC.

Note to organizers:

You will get cc's in multiple ways through the registration system: you can have your email receive an automatic copy of the registration page and abstract for each individual, and the email account that you have attached to PayPal will get a payment notification, too. Keep an eye on those two notifications, sometimes a payment will get hung up while the registration goes through, and vice-versa.

Also be aware of the fact that if someone pays on behalf of another individual for their registration, PayPal will only provide you the name of the person making the payment. For example, some people had their payment made by an organization, such as a CRM company, and we had to do some back-tracking to figure who was receiving the registration payment. The next iteration of the registration system should include an option such as: "Paying on behalf of....."

We heartily recommend the firm PC/Nametag (pcnametag.com) to prepare the badges. If you download an excel file of registrants and affiliations and forward to

them, they will prepare the badges and sort in trays in alphabetical order. They have a three-day turnaround time. Not cheap, but worth every penny.

III. The Conference

Needless to say, the success of the meeting itself hinges to a great degree on the hotel staff and infrastructure. We had terrific support this year. Given our experience, a meeting of the size of the 2014 one will require seven break-out rooms for Thursday/Friday and an additional space for posters. We only needed six rooms on Saturday. The hotel had committed many of their larger spaces to another event, so one drawback was some crowded rooms. Popular symposia will require a space with at least 100 seats, preferably more.

We had two thematic luncheons as well. Both seemed to have been well attended. If this concept catches on, as it has with other conference meetings, we will need to plan for that space in our hotel contract. Organizers will either need an additional room for such functions, or else insert them into a room where sessions end a tad earlier in the morning and start a tad later in the afternoon. The luncheons are around 90 minutes long. If food is served then the hotel staff will also need time beforehand to set up and time afterwards to clean the room.

Note to organizers:

AV costs continue to be one of the more outrageous parts of the bill. We were originally cited a price of about \$15,000, 75 to 100 percent higher than years past. They eventually dropped the price about a third in part because one of the organizers had some connections with the firm, and also because we had the right in the hotel contract to seek an outside AV vendor. We have little leverage here, but try to get a rider in the hotel contract that allows for SEAC to seek an outside AV vendor as an alternative to the one supplied by the hotel.

Poster boards. These may not be supplied by the hotel and you will need to identify a vendor to provide them. Build this into your budget. The hotel should be able to make suggestions for suppliers.

Editing the bulletin is the most time-intensive single task involved with the meeting. Build in plenty of time for that, and also plan for about a two week printing turnaround. If the meeting is held on the first or second weekend of November, the Bulletin should be printed by late October to provide time to prepare the registration packets. This means that you need to have the student paper prize competition information to include in the bulletin by a reasonable date. This year the competition submission deadline was October 10. We would suggest no later than that. As an aside, the student paper competition is handled by a SEAC committee and is not the responsibility of the meeting organizers. In addition to soliciting the papers, that committee also has the responsibility of contacting vendors for books and other prizes.

IV. Bookroom

As with the AV vendor, SEAC has little control over the bookroom. The hotel will supply a suitable space (hopefully) and their contract typically has a minimal table number requirement at a set cost per table (around \$25 is the going rate). This year we had 22 vendors and 48 tables reserved. We had to turn away one or two vendors the final week because the room was full.

There is some confusion among vendors (as well as us) as to whether they should receive name tags gratis. Several vendors pre-registered, many did not. Of those who had not a number came to the registration table and inquired about getting a badge (on the assumption they did not have to pay registration). We're not clear if there is a standard practice on this at other conferences. Many of these people do not attend events such as the receptions. On the flip side, to give them a badge for free still does qualify them for all events whereas other have to pay. It may be worth asking SAA what their policy is and then follow that practice.

Note to organizers:

SEAC traditionally pays for four tables: two are for SEAC publications and are overseen by Eugene Futato. The other two are for the student book prize. The University of Florida Press has generously overseen the student prize tables in the past, and hopefully will continue to do so in the future. So make sure the prize tables are placed by their island of tables.

The Hyatt Regency was able to provide a map of the room used by book vendors, and also work with us on the placement of tables with icons they could move around on the map (see Figure 1). Once we had this arrangement set up, we forwarded this map to all of the vendors a week or so before the event and they were very happy to have this information (but keep spares on hand for those vendors who forget their map).

Vendors would like to be able to set up the afternoon of the day before, and have extended hours for those arriving late. An optimum span for set-up on Wednesday is 1 pm to 9 pm. Some vendors like to mail boxes to the hotel. Find out from the hotel what their policy is: usually they want boxes to arrive no earlier than Monday of event week, and the name of a pick-up person must be provided.

V. Related Events

All of the extra-curricular events related to the conference seem to have gone over well. These included an off-site Thursday reception, student Thursday reception, two thematic luncheons, and a Saturday evening dinner. And the Finesse Band had people up and dancing in record time on Friday evening.

Chronic problems with gate-crashing experienced at the student reception in years past seem not to have re-surfaced in any notable way this time around. We put a poster out front indicating that admission was limited to students, sponsors, Board members, and Native American representatives. In addition, we had two bouncers stand guard the first 30 minutes. Given what we've heard from years past, probably a good idea to continue using these measures.

Note to organizers:

Guestimating numbers for receptions is a bit of a challenge, but caterers need some kind of ballpark figure. This year we used 400 for the Thursday evening reception (that worked out fine) and 100 for the student reception (should probably raise that another 25-50). We had 97 people buy tickets for the Saturday evening dinner, which is pretty consistent with years past where numbers have run in the 90 to 120 range.

Keep in mind that these events can be used to achieve the food and beverage minimum required by the hotel. Because the Saturday night dinner was held at the hotel, that contributed about $\frac{1}{4}$ of our minimum. Likewise, thematic luncheons can be shaped to meet the minimum. For example, for the SCARNG luncheon, we had the individuals pay their box lunch fee to us through the PayPal account, then included that luncheon on the hotel master bill (but we made the organizers of the luncheons do all of the footwork related to setting up the menu and notifying their participants of paying procedures, etc.).

VI. Odds & Ends

Baby sitting:

Seventeen registrants indicated their interest in baby-sitting services, five ended up taking advantage of it. Costs were borne by SEAC. The response to this was extremely positive, even many of those who ended up not bringing their children expressed their gratitude and voiced their hope that this would be continued in the future. This is probably a break-even proposition financially, and in our opinion should be continued. It costs no more than a hotel keg of beer. Organizers will need an extra room set aside for these purposes, however. The Hyatt sweetened the deal by moving in easy chairs and a crib (gratis), and also provided a sheet to place over the rug so kids would be more comfortable on the floor. These kinds of extras are worth asking for since they don't cost the hotel anything. One sitter accommodated our needs since we did not have a full house of kids all day long each day. However, if there is a strong demand for sitter services throughout a meeting, two should be considered so that one person can get away for necessary breaks.

Insurance:

The hotel that will host SEAC in Athens requires a liability policy for conference organizers. Kandi Hollenbach distributed a link to a firm (eventhelper.com) that provides cheap insurance and we decided to take advantage of this as well. We

would recommend in the future that all organizers purchase a similar policy, to protect themselves as well as the Board members from liability issues. The cost was \$171 for a \$2,000,000 aggregate policy, with a maximum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

State Society Book Tables

This addition went over very well this year. The state society groups made several hundred dollars each, and got rid of some excess manuscripts. The hotel provided the tables for free and gave them prime space. Even if a hotel charges for the tables in the future, SEAC may want to consider comp'ing these since it seems to be a good outreach service.

Special Needs:

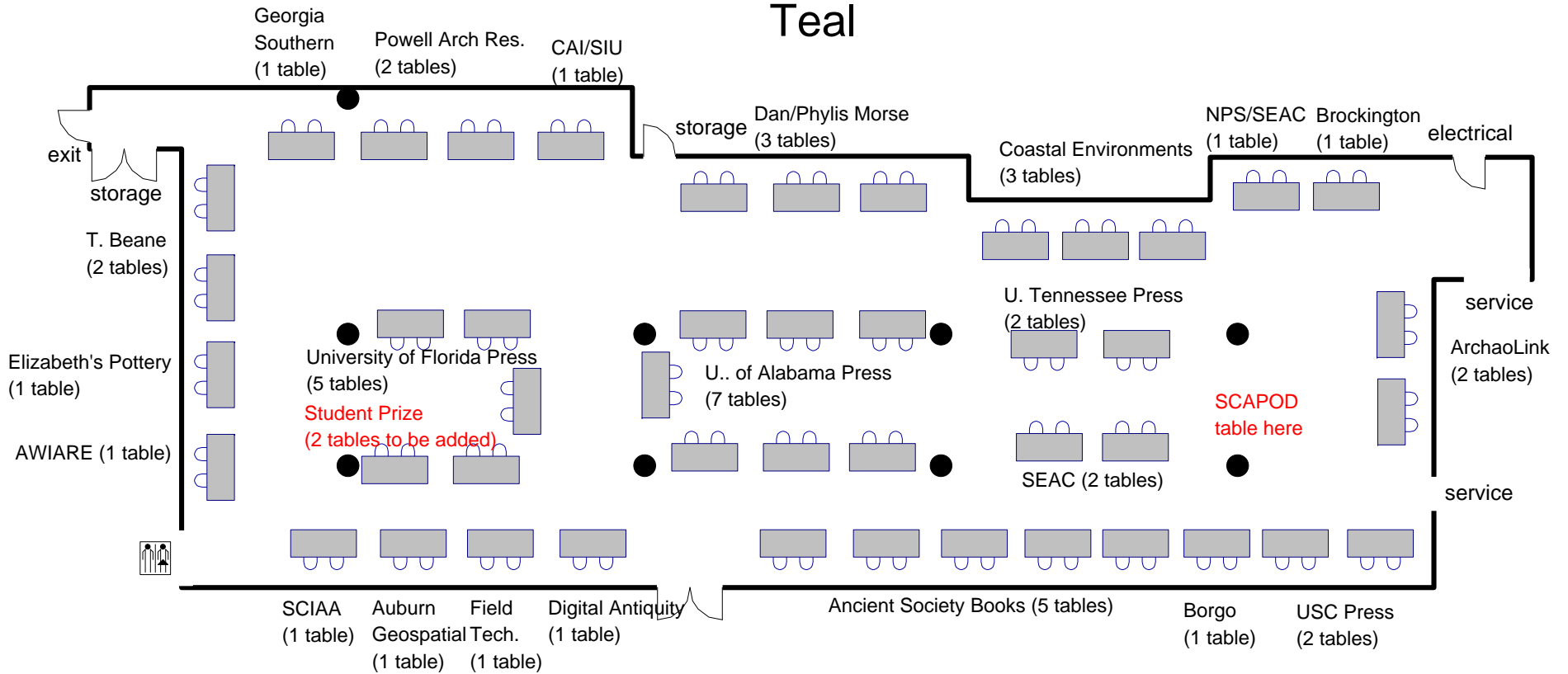
This year a hearing-impaired presenter asked us about providing someone who could do cued speech so that she could participate fully in her session. This was unanticipated in our planning and we're not sure what protocol is for other conferences. We decided to cover the costs since we had the money, but it may be worth exploring what policies are elsewhere for this kind of request. At the least, organizers should be prepared with an answer since the request may occur again next year.

As opposed to years past, we did not receive any requests for specialized equipment of any sort (overhead projectors and so on). However, note that if a hotel has free wi-fi in the lobby area, that does not mean it extends into the break-out rooms. A couple of the sessions needed a Skype set-up, and we had to pay an extra fee to extend wi-fi privileges into the room.



Archaeology November 12

Teal



46 Tabletop Exhibits



Figure 1. Book room layout.