



**A** THE UNIVERSITY  
OF ARIZONA  
Arizona Daily Star



Tucson  
Festival  
of Books

where  
Words & Imagination  
come to life

March 4 & 5, 2023

TUCSONFESTIVALOFBOOKS.ORG

2023 MODERATOR HANDBOOK  
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA MAIN MALL  
SATURDAY MARCH 4 & SUNDAY MARCH 5  
9:30 AM – 5:30 PM

Moderator Committee  
Steve Caine, Gay Vernon, Frank Mascia  
Brieanna Chillious, David Bodney  
[moderators@tucsonfestivalofbooks.org](mailto:moderators@tucsonfestivalofbooks.org)

**LOCATION:** University of Arizona Main Campus

**DATE:** MARCH 4-5, 2023

**TIME:** Saturday 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM and Sunday 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM

**ADMISSION:** Open to the public. Free.

**RAIN POLICY:** Rain or shine. Outdoor tents, indoor meeting rooms.

## **Introduction**

### **n**

Thank you for volunteering to be a moderator at the *Tucson Festival of Books*. By this time, you should have received your notification letter with instructions to open the Festival Portal to confirm your participation and receive information about your session. Now it is time to do the preparation work required for a successful and enjoyable moderating experience.

The purpose of this Handbook is to help you understand the critical role that the moderator plays and what is expected from you. The goal is to provide useful information on preparing for and conducting your session(s).

## **Orientation**

Attending an orientation is strongly encouraged for new moderators and refreshers are encouraged for those who haven't attended one in a few years. Orientations for the 2023 Festival are February 5, 1-3PM at Kol Ami Synagogue (225 N Country Club Rd) and for Children/Teen, Saturday, February 18 from 10-11:30AM in the College of Education, Rm 443. You will be offered the opportunity to sign up for one when you confirm.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

Facilitate a panel discussion of 1-4 authors following a one-hour agenda based on the panel topic. Begin with a short 30-60 second introduction of each author followed by inviting each author in turn to briefly summarize their book. At this point ask thoughtful questions you have prepared based on the panel topic/theme. Save approximately the last 15 minutes for audience questions.

### **Qualifications**

- Comfortable talking to groups, using a microphone
- Able to interact with multiple speakers/distractions and keep discussion on track
- Positive, non-judgmental attitude

**Your goal** is to allow the audience to understand how each of the books have approached a common theme and to appreciate how the authors have told their stories. We want them to leave wanting to read the books (if they haven't already), and feeling supportive of the festival.

All participants must agree to adhere to the TFOB and University of Arizona Covid-19 protocols. The protocols are found here and on the Festival website; updates will be posted so refer back as often as necessary to be fully informed.

## **MODERATOR INSTRUCTIONS**

Most sessions at the festival are panels, usually of two to three authors. This Handbook deals primarily with panels of this sort. If your session has only one speaker, you should determine if that author prefers an interview format or a prepared talk, and make your preparations accordingly.

Panels are designed to bring together authors whose books have a topics or themes in common such as perseverance, adoption, or issues pertaining to groups or events. The title of each panel reflects the theme and is shown on the festival schedule. Audience members usually choose to attend the sessions with themes and/or authors of interest to them.

### **Before the Festival:**

- 1. Confirm your participation.** If you haven't already done so, go to the Festival Portal and enter your moderator status as "Confirmed." Your notification email from the Festival contains directions for doing this.
- 2. Obtain and read a copy of each book to be discussed at the panel.** In the author information in the Portal, look for the "Committee Contact." This is a member of the Festival's Book & Author Committee who recruited that author and helped organize your panel. Committee Contacts can tell you more about the author and help you obtain a complimentary copy of the featured book. That is usually the author's most recent one – a primary motivation for participating in the Festival is to promote sales. If the Committee Contact is unable to provide a copy, the authors or their publishers will usually supply a review copy. (If those sources fail, you can buy books online from UA Bookstores. UA Bookstores is a key sponsor of the festival and sells featured authors' books at the festival on the UA Mall. Go to [shop.arizona.edu](http://shop.arizona.edu) and click on Books in the grey banner. You will receive amazon.com pricing.)
- 3. Contact your authors by email to introduce yourself as the moderator for their session.** After talking to the Committee Contacts, you should email each of your authors right away to introduce yourself, and to let them know the topic of the panel and who else will be on it. A sample letter is attached, but *feel free to revise it or draft your own*. NOTE: Privacy matters -- your initial email should be sent to each author separately, and you should ask permission before sharing an author's contact information with the other others in a group email.
- 4. Prepare author introductions and discussion questions based on the panel topic and your understanding of the featured books.** Your questions should relate to the topic of the panel. Try to promote discussion of how each author's featured book deals with that topic, why they handled it the way they did, and how it relates to their other works. Audiences are often interested in why and how each author wrote this particular book – for example, how novelists chose their characters and story, or how non-fiction authors conducted their research.

Most authors have web or social media pages that link to blog entries, profiles and interviews. These be a great help in formulating questions and promoting the panel's interaction. If the authors are familiar with each other's work, they can discuss similarities and differences in their approaches.

You will need to prepare a brief (no more than a minute) introduction of each author to be delivered at the beginning of your panel. In addition to the online information noted above, a great source of ideas for the introduction is the authors themselves – they may be willing to share interesting background for both the intro and the panel discussion. Do NOT simply use the bio from their book jacket – most of your audience will already have seen that. The best introductions tell them something they didn't previously know about the author.

### **Day of the Festival**

The Festival is a very hectic place. Be sure to arrive in plenty of time – traffic gets jammed up around the University and the Festival cannot provide moderators with guaranteed parking. Parking garages north of Speedway Blvd (Highland and Park Garages) and all surface lots are free, but they are very busy and full during Festival weekend.

**1. For authors presenting in a main mall venue, check in** at the Author Hospitality Room in the Student Union building at least 30 minutes before the time of your session. **Moderators for Authors presenting in a Children/Teen venue will check in at the College of Education Room 453.** This is where you will pick up your festival credential/name tag. Light snacks and drinks are available in the Hospitality Room. Meet your panel authors in the TFOB Authors Room before the panel session and give them your list of questions and bios. Festival escorts will walk you and the authors to your venue, where a Venue Monitor will explain the seating and microphone arrangements.

**2. Read out to the audience** the script provided by the Festival Committee. On the dais or table you will find a brief script, customized for your session, for you to read at the beginning of your session. This script welcomes the audience and sets the agenda for the next hour. It provides information about sponsors, and where they can get their purchased books signed after the session (very important to audience members).

**3. Introduce your authors.** Read each author's brief bio as you introduce them. Be sure to tell the audience the name of the book the author will talk about at this session, along with publisher and date of publication.

**4. Begin the discussion** with the questions you have prepared. The session monitor will be holding up signs that inform you that there are 15 min left for audience questions. Start the discussion and keep it flowing: The audience is there to hear the authors. Be professional and respectful. Keep your remarks brief. If one author starts to monopolize the discussion, you should look for opportunities to get the others involved. Begin with the topics or questions you have prepared in advance, but listen closely to the panelists' responses – look for opportunities to use their comments as a springboard for further discussion, even if it wanders away from the lines of questioning you had prepared. Call on the authors in turn to be sure that each one gets

a fair opportunity to speak.

**5. Audience questions and answers:** Because session time is limited, try to confine audience questions until a 15-minute Q&A session at the end. Many venues do not have microphones in the audience, so be prepared to repeat the questions so that everyone can hear. Don't let one or two members of the audience monopolize the Q&A or use it as a platform for their own speeches.

**6. Read the closing script.** The Festival runs on a very tight schedule. The Venue Monitor in the rear of the room will hold up signs as time winds down. End the session promptly -- the room must be cleared quickly to allow entry for the next session. There will be a brief closing script on the podium, thanking the authors and audience and again identifying the signing area. Direct audience members who want to talk to the authors to go to the signing area. The featured books will be for sale near the signing area. At the end of the session, your participation is complete. Festival volunteers will escort the authors following each session to the book-signing site on the UA Mall, and you are free to enjoy the rest of the Festival.

#### **In summary:**

- Stick to the published start and end times. These have been created to allow for audience passage between sessions and signing activities.
- Ensure that each author has an equal amount of "air time."
- Minimize your own opinions and comments in favor of letting the authors talk.
- Show your enthusiasm for the authors and their books, it's infectious!

### **GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE FESTIVAL**

**Emergencies:** In case of emergency, ask the Venue Monitor at your session to contact UA Police, Festival Command Center, or 911, depending on the emergency. If there is a life-threatening medical or other type of emergency, call 911. If an audience member is disruptive, ask him or her to leave; in case of refusal ask the Venue Monitor to call security to remove the individual.

**Lost and found:** If you find a lost item, turn it in to a Festival Information Booth. Items not retrieved by the end of the festival Sunday at 5:30 PM will be given to UA Student Union Information Desk staff. That is the central Lost and Found site on the campus.

**Lost Child:** Stay with the child and ask a festival volunteer to report the lost child by name to any festival security volunteer, festival volunteer equipped with a two-way radio, the First Aid tent staff or nearest festival information booth. Do not leave a lost child unattended. When an individual arrives to claim the child, they must show identification and security staff will release the child and cancel the lost child alert—do not release the child yourself, wait for security.

**Food and Drink:** Food and beverages will be sold at Food Courts on the UA Mall from 10 AM to 5:30 PM each day. Also, restaurants and coffee shops in the UA Student Union on the UA campus will be open during festivals hours to serve visitors.

**Time Zone for travelers:** You may need to remind out-of-state authors that Arizona is on

Mountain Standard Time 365 days a year.

## QUESTIONS?

Feel free to email [moderators@tucsonfestivalofbooks.org](mailto:moderators@tucsonfestivalofbooks.org) with your pre-festival questions. You may also call the festival's AmeriCorps Volunteers at 520.621.0302 from 9 AM to 4 PM Monday through Friday. Leave a voice message if your call is unanswered.

*Thanks for volunteering!*

## **SAMPLE MODERATOR EMAIL TO AUTHORS**

This sample is intended to help you formulate your own approach to getting in touch with the members of your panel. Feel free to modify it or compose your own.

**Subject:** Tucson Panel – “Self Reliance”

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Dear \_\_\_\_\_--

My name is Jane Fairchild. I am delighted that I will be the Moderator of one of your panels at the upcoming Tucson Festival of Books. Here are the details of the panel:

Title: **Self Reliance**

Date/Time: **Sunday, 2:30 am to 3:30 pm**

Location: **Integrated Learning Center Room 141**

Panelists: **Therese Anne Fowler, Susan Meissner, Jennifer Robson**

Description: Meet characters who think on their feet and demonstrate self-reliance during times of war and social change, whether they are from a world of enormous wealth and privilege, or one of shortages and rationing.

The following books will be highlighted in this panel: *The Well Behaved Woman: A Novel of the Vanderbilts* by Therese Anne Fowler, *The Last Year of the War* by Susan Meissner, and *The Gown* by Jennifer Robson. Because of the size of crowds and the large number of panel venues, the Festival is generally unable to provide any technology beyond a microphone. Generally the format for Festival panels is a moderated discussion centered on the panel topic. Power Point and similar presentations are strongly discouraged. If you believe the nature of your presentation will require additional technology, it is important that you let me know immediately.

If you are willing to share your email or other contact information with the other authors, please let me know and I will put you all in touch so you can make contact before the Festival.

I will spend the next few weeks reading the panel books and formulating questions. If you have any questions you would particularly like me to ask, or any topics you particularly want me to stay away from, please let me know. On the day of our panel I will meet you in the Author Hospitality Room 30 minutes before our panel. Please feel free to go earlier than that, or at any time over the festival, to meet and chat with the other presenting authors. There will be food and other goodies there for you at check-in. I look forward to meeting you soon.

All the best,

Jane Fairchild

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520-909-5069