

Detailed Instructions for Associate Chairs (ACs) from the CHI '09 Papers Co-Chairs

Recall that you have three primary tasks for each of your primary (1AC) papers:

- Recruit, assign, and manage reviewers (starts 9/30, reviews due 10/29)
- Prepare, update, and finalize a meta-review of the paper (due 11/3, update 12/1, finalized 12/5)
- Lead discussion of the paper at the PC meeting (if paper is discussed; 12/4)

You will also be asked to serve as a secondary AC (2AC) for some papers. For each of these you will have two primary tasks:

- Prepare a review of the paper (due 11/26)
- Assist the 1AC in discussion of the paper at the PC meeting (12/4)

Detailed Schedule for AC work

Start Date	Task
Mon 9/15	Make travel arrangement for the PC meeting
Fri 9/19	(Papers due from authors)
Mon 9/29	AC assignments released to you
Tue 9/30	Look for conflicts and other difficulties, optionally swap problem papers for others
Tue 9/30	Recruit three high quality external reviewers for each paper
Thu 10/7	Rough target date for having all external reviewers signed up
Thu 10/7	Track review quality and follow up to ensure reviews are in on time as needed
Wed 10/29	Reviews due back from reviewers
Wed 10/29	Track missing reviews & quickly resolve (possibly with replacement reviews)
Wed 10/29	Initiate reviewer discussion as needed
Wed 10/29	Write meta-reviews
Mon 11/3	Hard deadline for all reviews (including meta-, replacement, and additional reviews)
Tues 11/4	Reviews and meta-reviews released to authors for rebuttal
Tues 11/4	Preliminary "discuss" status determined (based on score cut offs and AC input)
Wed 11/5	SCs assign "discuss" papers to 2ACs for review
Mon 11/10	Author rebuttals due
Tues 11/11	Initiate additional reviewer discussion as needed
Tues 11/11	Review rebuttals, possibly move papers to "discuss" and recruit 2AC reviewer
Mon 11/26	2AC reviews due
Mon 12/1	Updated meta-reviews and final "discuss" status due
Thu 12/4	PC meeting in Boston
Fri 12/5	Post-meeting finalization of feedback to authors (done in Boston if possible)
Tue 12/8	Materials certified by ACs as ready to go back to authors
Wed 12/9	Reviews and decisions returned to authors

Comments on detail items for ACs

Mon 9/29: AC assignments released to you

All work with papers for the conference is coordinated through the web-based PCS conference system which you will find at: <https://precisionconference.com/~sigchi> As soon as paper assignments are released you should go to the site and look over each paper.

Tue 9/30: Look for conflicts and other difficulties and optionally swap problem papers for others

As a part of your initial review of each paper you should check for any hidden conflicts of interest that the subcommittee chair might have missed. If you find a conflict you will need to "swap" the paper for another one. Also, if you feel you really are not the right person to serve as 1AC for this paper **and** there is probably someone else on your subcommittee who would obviously be better suited, you may also attempt to swap that paper for another more suitable one (but we don't expect this to happen very frequently). Swapping works on a "give one, take one" basis. For non-conflict swaps, particularly a little later in the process, it might be best to identify and take a paper from the pool before you return yours. For conflicted papers you must put your paper in regardless, so it's best to do that as soon as possible. In that case you may need to return later to find the replacement, but please do try to find one (if papers remain in the pool past a certain point, the SC will have to force an assignment to a non-conflicting AC).

SPECIAL NOTE: the first time you view the "unassigned paper pool" to find papers to swap with, you will be shown a view which contains information about all papers submitted to the whole conference. However, it's very important that you do not take a paper outside your subcommittee. **To avoid potential errors, please be certain to select the view of papers corresponding to just your subcommittee and then select papers only from your subcommittee for swaps.** You select this view using the drop down menu near the top left, immediately below the CHI 2009 logo. Although this is obviously not the most usable possible setup, this use of views for subcommittees was a compromise to keep the cost and debugging issues associated with modifying the PCS system to a minimum, so please bear with us. This and the committee meeting view should be the only places this comes up, and you should only have to do this once for each of these views.

Tue 9/30: Recruit three high quality external reviewers for each paper

Once you have determined that you do not have conflicts, and are going to handle a given paper, the most critical part of the review process -- recruiting of high quality reviewer -- begins. The most critical component of the reforms instituted this year lies in getting high quality reviews, from true experts, for every paper. Since you are picking those reviewers, your role in this is absolutely essential. The most important part of your job lies in recruiting the right reviewers -- not just acceptable reviewers, but good reviewers, and not just some good reviewers, but as best you can, all good reviewers. To help focus on the importance of this task, we are asking that you be prepared at the PC meeting to give a explanation to the rest of the subcommittee for why you picked the reviewers you picked.

At the same time, experienced ACs also know that it's important to recruit reviewers fairly quickly; otherwise you may find that some of the more in-demand reviewers for any given topic may have already made commitments to others. These two constraints can make this part of the job difficult. However, that's why we have recruited the best people in the field to do it.

There are a number of strategies for finding good reviewers, but what you seek in the end is someone who really knows the subject matter, will make substantive insightful comments, and has the perspective to evaluate how interesting the results are and whether they are sufficiently relevant to (some part of) HCI as a field. Your first line of attack for finding good reviewers may be your own knowledge -- if the paper is "in your area" (or close to it) you may be able to directly think of a good candidate that you already know to be an expert. Another excellent way to isolate people knowledgeable and experienced in the area is to consider authors of previously published results on the topic. You will likely find some of these publications in the references of the paper itself. Searching for related work in the ACM Digital Library (<http://portal.acm.org/advsearch.cfm>) and other search engines

is also typically very helpful. Keep in mind that publishing a single paper on a topic, even at a good venue such as CHI, might not mean a person is an expert, and that different authors may have contributed different things to a particular paper. For potential reviewers you are not familiar with in advance, it can be helpful to try to have a look at their overall research record through their web presence.

We generally discourage the use of PhD student or convenient "friends down the hall", *unless* that person really is a highly qualified expert in the area (for example a late stage PhD student might well be extremely knowledgeable in the topic of the dissertation they are completing and mature enough to be a good reviewer). This year there will be no explicit limits placed on use of reviewers from these categories. But remember that you will be asked to publicly justify the choices that you have made and choosing a PhD student or more than one of your nearby colleagues may need extra justification.

Thu 10/7: Rough target date for having all external reviewers signed up

Each paper must have at least three external reviewers beyond yourself and the possible 2AC review (and please don't request reviews from other ACs as a part of this three.) A good strategy for ensuring that you can find three who will commit to reviewing, is to be prepared for some of your reviewers to decline. As you search for good reviewers, don't stop at a list of three, but when possible go on to identify one or two more candidates who can be held in reserve. That way when/if a potential reviewer declines you will be prepared to immediately ask one of your backup candidates. You may find that potential reviewers are slow to respond to requests. You might want to set deadlines for a response based on the target date above, and you might consider sending a request to a backup choice in the case of non-responders. (You may occasionally end up with more than three reviewers this way. However, we ask that you do not seek more than three reviews as standard practice because good reviewers are a finite resource and we have many papers that need them.) Note that this date is a rough target only. The important thing is to ensure that you have three good quality completed reviews by the review deadline.

Thu 10/7: Track review quality and follow up to ensure reviews are in on time as needed

As the review process unfolds you should track your outstanding reviews, send a personal reminder about a week before the deadline, and read over the ones you have received. If it looks like you may have lost a reviewer, you might consider trying to get a late replacement review (see below). If you find reviews that you think are of lower quality than you will be proud to stand up at the meeting and state that you recruited, you may want to (very gently and diplomatically -- these are all volunteers giving of their scarce time) suggest to them that they e.g., extend the rationale given for their score. You should not do this in an attempt to change a judgment you do not agree with, but only to ensure that all judgments are well justified, authors can understand them, and they so can be weighed against opposing views. Finally, if you find that reviews for a particular paper are widely divergent and it is unclear how to resolve this you may consider recruiting an additional reviewer as a "tie breaker". You should not, however, recruit additional reviewers simply with the intent of moving the average away from a result you don't like.

Wed 10/29: Reviews due back from reviewers

Wed 10/29: Track missing reviews & quickly resolve (possibly with replacement reviews)

There is some extra time after the deadline for reviews to allow you to round up final missing reviewers from reviewers (but not much). In rare cases it may be necessary to find last minute replacement reviews. You should try to keep this to a minimum (and catch these cases as early as you can) because

review quality can suffer. However, we really need 3 external reviews for every paper going into rebuttal on 11/4.

Wed 10/29: Initiate reviewer discussion as needed

Wed 10/29: Write meta-reviews

Once reviews for a paper are available you can write a meta-review. If there are significant disagreements between reviewers you may wish to initiate a discussion among them to see if this can assist you in resolving these. Meta-reviews may contain some (preferably separate) discussion of how you personally see the paper, but are primarily a summary description of the external reviews indicating points where the reviews agree and disagree. If reviews disagree you may wish to indicate which conflicting arguments you feel are more persuasive or points should be weighted more heavily (but remember that the reviewers will see your meta-review also). The score you give for the meta-review should normally reflect the underlying reviews. As a guide you should likely start with the average of the review scores and then think about what adjustments from that might be justified based on resolving conflicts and weighting of the importance of particular points raised. We are asking you to use your expert judgment here, but you should not be completely substituting your opinion for that of your reviewers.

Mon 11/3: Hard deadline for all reviews (including meta-, replacement, and additional reviews)

Tues 11/4: Reviews and meta-reviews released to authors for rebuttal

All reviews and meta-reviews (with scores) will be released to authors on this date to help them prepare a rebuttal. Rebuttals allow authors to counter factual errors in the reviews, so it's important that the authors are able to see all the external reviews at this point. Note that after this point, since the authors will have seen your meta-review it is probably best to make all changes as additions to the review. If you end up adjusting the score on the meta-review after this point (e.g., based on the author's rebuttal) you should remember that the author knows this is a change and add an explicit explanation of why this was done to the meta-review.

Tues 11/4: Preliminary "discuss" status determined (based on score cut offs and AC input)

Wed 11/5: SCs assign "discuss" papers to 2ACs for review

Just after releasing papers to authors for rebuttal, the papers chairs will determine cutoff lines for papers which will be by default accepted or rejected without discussion at the PC meeting. Cutoffs will be based on score average and variance. In addition you may request discussion for papers which wouldn't normally receive it if you feel this is justified. All papers which are to be discussed at the PC meeting need to have an additional AC present who has also reviewed the paper. A secondary AC for all these papers will be assigned by your subcommittee chair at this point. 2AC reviews are full reviews much like external reviews.

Mon 11/10: Author rebuttals due

Tues 11/11: Initiate reviewer discussion as needed

Tues 11/11: Review rebuttals, possibly move papers to "discuss" and recruit 2AC reviewer

You should look at all rebuttals. If you find that the rebuttal raises important points you may wish to change previously non-discussed paper to a discussed paper. In that case you should recruit a secondary AC for the paper. (In general, any paper discussed at the PC meeting needs to have at least two people in the room who have read it -- it is your responsibility to ensure this is the case). If there are points in the rebuttal that need discussion you may also initiate additional discussion among the reviewers at this point.

Mon 11/26: 2AC reviews due

Mon 12/1: Updated meta-reviews and final "discuss" status due

Based on the newly available 2AC review, the rebuttal, and any additional discussion, you can make additional changes (most likely additions) to your meta-reviews. Again, if you end up changing scores based on these updates it is important that you explicitly explain this in the meta-review. The final status of whether the paper is to be discussed at the PC meeting should be established at this point. This will happen either via the automatic cutoff points or your explicit request to discuss a paper (as marked on the meta-review form).

Thu 12/4: PC meeting in Boston

Additional details about the conduct of the PC meeting will be provided separately. Please plan to arrive Wednesday afternoon or evening so we can start work first thing Thursday morning. Work will continue until 1:30pm Friday. Please don't plan a departure that would require you to leave the meeting early (Friday night hotel costs will be covered where necessary due to travel arrangements).

Fri 12/5: Post-meeting finalization of feedback to authors (done in Boston if possible)**Tue 12/8: Materials certified by ACs as ready to go back to authors****Wed 12/9: Reviews and decisions returned to authors**

After the meeting you will need to make final updates to the feedback that will be returned to the authors and mark in the system when this is ready to be released to the authors. This needs to happen fairly quickly to meet our schedule, so you probably want to try to have most or all of this done before you leave Boston. At this stage it is important that you provide information to the authors that enables them to understand why the decision that was made was made. For conditionally accepted papers you need to provide clear feedback about the expectations of the committee about what changes may be needed in the paper.

Scott Hudson and Saul Greenberg, papers co-chairs
<mailto:papers@chi2009.org>