

Guidelines for Local Arrangements Committees

Overview

These guidelines are provided as a resource and guide for Local Arrangements Committees. For additional information, Local Arrangements Committees are encouraged to consult programs from recent meetings, past Local Arrangement Chairs, members of the Executive Committee (especially the Section chair), and long-time Section members. Certain details of the local arrangements will vary from site to site, but any major departure from Section traditions should be discussed with the Section Chair and the Executive Committee.

Local Arrangements Committees will usually consist of four or five faculty members from the host institution and possibly one or two from nearby institutions. The Section Chair and Program Committee Chair are ex officio members of the Local Arrangements Committee. **Maintain communication with the Program Committee Chair, particularly as to the room and equipment needs for the meeting.**

Responsibilities of the Local Arrangements Committee include:

College / University Logistics:

- **Obtaining approval and support** from appropriate campus administrators to hold the meeting and making sure that campus policies do not conflict with Section policies, e.g. that we are not going to be charged for the use of the facilities; (The Dean, Vice-President, and President, can be helpful, depending on the school. It is important to acknowledge all discussions with email correspondence, keep all email correspondence, and keep records of any special funding sources discussed for costs of the meeting.)
- **Insurance matters:** Contacting the national MAA office to deal with any insurance matters if the local institution requires insurance from us for the meeting.
- **Being in contact with campus facilities office** about any special considerations or arrangements that may arise or be needed.
- **Arranging for the rooms and the equipment** needed for the talks, workshops, panel discussions, etc. on the program. ***Reserve the rooms as early as possible***, remembering that there may be other events on campus for which these rooms might be in use as well. See the section “Room Needs” that appears later in these guidelines.
- **Technology:** Make sure that there are people available who are knowledgeable about any technology that will be used. Arrange for technology help from your department or the IT department. Consider possible alternatives if insurmountable technology problems arise.

- **Arranging the food** for the Section NExT lunch on Friday, refreshments on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, the Friday evening reception, the Friday evening banquet, and Saturday's lunch. Details can be found in the section "Food" later in these guidelines.
- **Arranging for parking** for the meeting including parking for the elderly/handicapped; obtaining parking passes if required.
- **Put up signs** leading from the edge of campus to the parking lots and from the parking lots to the registration site.
- **Meeting with campus security/police** to discuss any special arrangements that might need to be made for security concerns during the meeting; and provide them with a copy of the schedule for the meeting. Also make arrangements with campus security/police or the facilities office to ensure that **buildings and rooms will be unlocked/open** during the conference, especially Saturday morning, and not locked until all the activities are finished on Friday evening.
- **Developing a list of area hotels/motels** with addresses, phone numbers and prices, and arranging for **on-campus housing** in the residence halls (spring meetings only). In some areas it may be necessary to make arrangements up to a year in advance. Try to have a block of rooms set aside. Check the hotels/motels the college/university uses to see if they will give you an especially low price. Often hotels will give special rates if booked through the university so you should explore that route. The AAA guide for the state may be helpful since it provides information and pricing information about the hotels/motels in the area. Use the price information listed as a starting point and ask for discounts based on the number of folks who you anticipate will need accommodations. Some area hotels/motels can be quite competitive and may provide free breakfast or even offer transportation to the college/university for those staying at their hotel/motel.
- **Arranging for someone from the college such as the President, VPAA or Dean** to welcome us to the campus. Typically the welcome is done at the beginning of the banquet on Friday, but it can be done after the banquet if need be. If possible, get the President. Also, it is nice to invite the administrator who is welcoming us to attend the reception, banquet, and luncheon as well.
- **Attend to any local travel arrangements of any speakers** from outside the section. These may include obtaining information on transportation from the airport, rental cars, or finding a volunteer to transport the person to or from the airport.

Attendance

Attendance will vary from meeting to meeting depending on location, program, competing conferences, etc., but in the fall figure on 150-200 and in the spring 75-100.

Room Needs

The following should be reserved from Friday 11:00 to Saturday 4:30:

- a large lecture hall to accommodate all the participants of the meeting;
- several classrooms for concurrent sessions including the various types of contributed paper sessions; these rooms should ideally be located close together
- a computer classroom (depending on the program);
- a registration area, frequently a lobby area;
- a place for Friday and Saturday refreshments, preferably near the registration and exhibits areas;
- an exhibit area with tables for the publishers and software companies; this should be near the registration and refreshments so that folks can easily find them;
- a dining area for meals (needs only to be reserved during meal hours).

It is assumed that all rooms for talks and workshops would have an overhead projector and a chalkboard or whiteboard. Increasingly there are requests for computers, projection capability, and access to MS PowerPoint, mathematical software, and the Internet. Local Arrangements chairs should work with the Program Committee and the speakers to provide such resources when they are available. Different campuses have different levels of technology resources. More limited resources should not be an impediment to hosting a Section meeting. As program elements become more reliant on technology, it is increasingly important to have people with technical expertise from the department or the college accessible in case of glitches.

Food

- **Section NExT Lunch:** Lunch for Section NExT usually consists of sandwiches, chips, dessert, and soda – although there have been variations. Usually there are about 20 people for the Section NExT Lunch. You will know the exact number from the registrations you receive, but always plan for a couple extra people. The Section NExT Lunch is Friday 12:00-1:00. You should keep in contact with the coordinator of Section NeXT, currently Karen Stanish (kstanish@keene.edu).
- **Refreshments:** Refreshments are usually served Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Friday afternoon refreshments usually consist of cookies and soda. Refreshments Saturday morning during the Break consist of bagels, donuts, danishes, and coffee. Consider asking offices on campus to sponsor the refreshments, e.g., the department, dean, alumni association, career services office, or any special program or office that seems to have a lot of money—whatever seems appropriate. Asking book/tech representatives to sponsor refreshments for a break or even for the reception is also a possibility.

- **Friday Evening Reception:** This usually occurs Friday 6:00 and lasts about a half hour. Typically there are light appetizers (e.g. cheese and crackers) and often a cash bar. Be sure to check the policies of the college/university if you are planning to have a (cash) bar, keeping in mind that the Section must not violate the policies of the college/university or the LAW.
- **Friday Evening Banquet:** This is a big dinner occurring Friday from 6:30 to 8:00. Buffet style is usually the best way to go. Main entrees typically include a choice of beef or chicken, and pasta. There are also side dishes such as a starch and a salad. Finally there is dessert. Beverages usually include soda, water, and coffee. Try to get the best deal that you can and beware of any hidden or extra costs such as table cloths, napkins, and wait staff; minimize these as best you can. If there are fees for catering for “outside organizations” or a discount for campus groups, try to have us considered a campus group through department sponsorship. Get help from a chair or other administrator if you’re having problems with the food services people; being careful not to violate any contracts/agreements that the catering service may have with the college/university;
- **Saturday Lunch:** Typically at noon on Saturday, this is less formal than the Friday evening banquet. Usually sandwiches, chips, salad, and dessert suffice along with beverages such as soda and water.

Publicity:

- **Providing the completed program to the Newsletter Editor and Webmaster**, currently Frank Ford (fpford@providence.edu).

The program (with the exception of any student, contributed, or new colleagues talks) should be completed by September 30th for the fall meeting, and March 31st for the spring meeting.

While the program needs to be completed by the dates listed above, information may be sent before these dates in peace-meal as it becomes available. If you choose to make the meeting web page yourself, send the URL to Frank Ford. In addition to the program schedule and speaker information, the web page should include all local arrangements information such as directions to the campus, parking information, and a campus map, but at least the location for on-campus registration, lodging (hotel/motel/dorm) information and costs, and the registration form.

- If your department or the college/university maintains a list of area **high schools**, consider sending out a letter inviting math teachers in the area to attend the meeting. **If your college/university is located near other colleges**, consider giving their math department a personal invitation too.
- Consider arranging for **publicity with local media and campus publications**. The college relations and alumni offices may be helpful.

Exhibits

- **Contacting MAA** to arrange for books and sample copies of journals to be sent for the meeting.
- **Contacting tech/book reps** to arrange for companies interested in having a book/tech display during the meeting – work with your publishers book representatives for book displays, and call makers of major software to see if these companies would like to have a display. When you speak with these representatives, consider asking for donations for raffles during the meeting – those attending the meeting will enjoy the give-aways.
- Make sure that there will be enough **tables** to accommodate all of the exhibitors.
- Arrange for a person to sit at the **MAA book table**;

The Meeting Program

The Local Arrangements Committee **creates and prints copies of the meeting program** for all the participants. The format of the program should be discussed with the Program Chair. Usually the Program Committee sends all necessary files to the Local Arrangements Committee so that the Local Arrangements Committee can create and print copies of the program. When creating the program, the Local Arrangement Committee will need to communicate with the coordinators of Student Papers Session (Raimundo Kovac - rkovac@ric.edu), Contributed Papers Session Eric Johnson - Eric.C.Johnson@uscga.edu), and New Colleagues Session (fall meetings only: Phil Hotchkiss - photchkiss@wsc.ma.edu) and Chris Aubuchon - Christopher.Aubuchon@jsc.edu) to obtain the speakers, titles, and abstracts for the talks during these sessions.

Putting Together Folders

A few days prior to the meeting, a folder should be created for each preregistered attendee. Extra folders should be created as there are always walk-in registrants and unexpected guests. Each folder should contain:

- A copy of the **meeting program**.
- A **badge** with the person's name and affiliation. Plastic hanging badges are a lot better than the "Hello! My name is" stick-on name badges.
- A **campus map**. If possible, highlight the buildings on campus that will be used during the conference as well as parking areas.

- **A list of pre-registered participants** with affiliation and e-mail.
- **Other materials** such as paper, pen, information about the college. At some recent meetings there have been some nice little touches like pens and paper with the name of the meeting and site, but balance these extras with cost considerations.
- Since this is an opportunity for campus publicity, the admissions office, print shop, college relations, Dean, VPAA or President may be helpful in providing or subsidizing these materials; compare the costs of obtaining materials such as badges through the college versus retail stores such as Staples.

Registration

- **Administering on-site registration:** Make sure that you have **faculty and students** to help with on-site registration, set up and clean up of book/tech displays, monitor workshops and sessions for possible problems and provide other help as needed.
- **Administering pre-registration:** You may get many e-mails and phone calls about registrations as the deadline draws near. Keep careful records of who has paid and who has not paid and encourage people to send in their registration and check immediately. Setting up a spreadsheet with all of the information can be helpful.
- **Keep all registration forms** and record on the form when you received/processed the registration. Consider recording the check number of all checks before you forward them to the Secretary/Treasurer.
- **Forward all registration funds and all receipts for expenses** to the Section Secretary/Treasurer, currently Ann Kizanis (akizanis@wnec.edu).

Fees Charged to Attendees

A key issue for the Local Arrangements Committee is the costs of the conference. We expect that the host institution will offer us the use of its facilities without charges, either direct or indirect, such as for custodial staff. The host institution usually absorbs costs for secretarial work, printing the program, folders, and any postage. Sometimes the institution has also provided for Friday afternoon and Saturday morning refreshments. The institution as a result gets exposure and publicity and provides a service to the larger academic community.

Attendees are charged separately for (1) registration, (2) the Friday evening banquet, (3) Saturday's lunch, and (4) the dorm room (spring meetings only). Attendees should also note if they are planning to attend Section NExT. There is no charge for the Section NExT Lunch, the

refreshments, or the Friday evening reception.

- The registration fees are set by the Executive Committee and are currently \$25 for MAA members, \$30 for non-members and \$10 for students and the retired/unemployed.
- The costs of the banquet and lunch will depend on the prices set by the local food service providers. These have been growing recently as a review of recent Newsletters shows. A reasonable target is \$25 to \$30 for the banquet and \$12 to \$15 for the lunch. If you can do better than that, great! But if the cost of the meals (lunch, in particular) is too high, some participants will get their meals elsewhere. **The prices are usually padded** a little to cover those, such as speakers, who are not being charged.
- The cost of a room in the Residence Halls (for spring meetings) is set by the local institution and there is usually no control or choice in the matter. If there is a choice, generally **the most economical option should be chosen**. Those who are looking for more amenities will typically stay at a hotel.
- Fees for registration, meals, and dorm rooms (spring meeting) are waived for invited speakers and for student speakers giving solo authored presentations. If a group of students gives a presentation, the above fees are waived for one student in the group.
- Publishers and Software companies are charged \$100 for a table and \$150 for two tables to display their products. If they sign up early enough they are listed in the Newsletter as well as the program. MAA Publishers are not charged.

One Final Word

“Go with the flow” – remember that “stuff happens”. Plan ahead and make sure that you have enough back up equipment and back up rooms. **Just do your best.**