Guidelines for Program Committees

Overview

These guidelines are provided as a resource and guide for Program Committees. For additional information, Program Committees are encouraged to consult programs from recent meetings, past program chairs, members of the Executive Committee (especially the Section chair), and long-time Section members. Program Committees have a certain amount of freedom in determining the program, but any major departure from Section traditions should be discussed with the Section Chair and the Executive Committee.

Program Committees will usually consist of from three to five members representing a wide variety of members and possible meeting participants including women and men, junior and senior faculty, and two-year college faculty. The Section Chair and Local Arrangements Chair are ex officio members of the Program Committee. **Maintain communication with the Local Arrangements Chair, particularly as to the room and equipment needs for the meeting.**

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Program Committee include:

- **Inviting the main speakers/presenters** for talks, workshops, and/or panel discussions. When inviting speakers, please keep in mind the "Costs and Budgetary Restrictions" which can be found at the end of these guidelines. The Program Committee should make the invited speakers register for the meeting and indicate their meal preferences. Since the speakers do not have to pay for registration or meals, the ideal way to handle this is for the Program Committee to fill out the registration and meal preferences for the speakers and be sure that these are given to the Local Arrangements Committee.

- **Obtaining titles, abstracts, biographical information, and equipment needs** from the invited speakers/presenters; maintaining communication with speakers/presenters to confirm the date and time for their presentations, and confirming that they have directions to and parking for the meeting. Also confirm with speakers that while registration and meal fees are waived, they will still need to register for the meeting so that we can have an accurate head count.

- **Creating the program.** The program should contain
    - Program Schedule with times and locations of events
    - Abstracts of all talks (invited, students, and contributed)
    - Biographies of invited speakers
    - List of members of the Program and Local Arrangements Committees

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.

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

- **Providing the completed program to the Local Arrangements Chair**, who is responsible for creating and copying the meeting program; discussing with the Local Arrangements Chair in what form the information should be sent to facilitate the creation of the program; maintaining frequent communication with the Local Arrangements Chair, particularly as to the room and equipment needs for the meeting so that (s)he can make the necessary arrangements as soon as possible; coordinating with the Local Arrangements Chair to ensure that the local needs, if any, for the speakers/presenters, such as local transportation, and lodging are arranged;

- **Sending a note of thanks** to all invited speakers and presenters after the meeting.

Meeting Format

The typical format of a Section Meeting is below. Some flexibility is allowed and often occurs. However, any major variations should be discussed with the Section Chair. The actual meeting begins at 3:00 on Friday. The Section NExT and Executive Committee meetings are preliminaries prior to the meeting.

Friday	
11:30-5:30	Registration
12:00-2:00	Section NExT (Lunch 12:00-1:00, Speaker 1:00-2:00)
1:30-3:00	1. Executive Committee Meeting 2. Problem Solving Competition (fall meeting 1:00-3:00 or 2:00-4:00)
3:00-3:50	Invited Speaker / Panel
4:00-4:50	Invited Speaker / Panel
5:00-6:00	Student Presentations
6:00-6:30	Reception
6:30-8:00	Banquet

	Greetings from the Host Institution should be done either directly before or directly after the banquet.
8:00-9:00	Invited Speaker

Saturday	
8:30-11:00	Registration
8:30-11:30	One or two invited speakers / panels. The New Colleague Talks (fall meeting only) is usually scheduled for an hour during this time period and may be scheduled in parallel to a workshop. There should also be a 30 minute break during this time period, with refreshments near any book exhibitors.
11:30-12:00	Business Meeting (Can occur earlier Saturday morning, but not before 10:00.)
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:00-4:30 (end time may be sooner)	One or two invited speakers / panels. The Contributed Papers is usually scheduled for an hour during this time period and may be scheduled in parallel to a workshop.

Do not have concurrent sessions during the major presentations or during the presentations of any invited speaker. Below are details for the specific sessions during a meeting:

a) **Section NExT**: Publicizing Section NExT and determining the speaker for Section NExT is the responsibility of the Section NExT coordinator, currently Karen Stanish (kstanish@keene.edu). Section NExT always occurs on Friday 12:00-2:00 and is open to pre-tenure faculty only.

b) **The Executive Committee Meeting**: The Executive Committee Meeting is scheduled for Friday 1:30-3:00. All members of the Section are welcome to attend, but in reality, only a couple of people other than officers usually attend.

c) **Problem Solving Competition**: This is a team competition held during the **fall meeting** for undergraduate students open to all colleges and universities of the Section. It is held on Friday afternoons and parallels the Executive Committee meeting and one other session (either Section NExT or the 3:00 talk). This competition is coordinated by Jennifer Berg (jberg5@fsc.edu) and Joe Fields (fieldsj1@southernct.edu).

d) **Student Paper Sessions**: Publicizing and organizing these sessions is the responsibility of the Student Papers coordinator, currently Raimundo Kovac (rkovac@ric.edu). The

Student Paper Sessions run in parallel sessions.

e) **After Dinner Talk on Friday:** One of the major lectures should be scheduled here. See the section "Major Lectures" later in these guidelines for details.

f) **New Colleagues Sessions**: These sessions occur at the **fall meeting** for new members of the Section. Publicizing and organizing these sessions is the responsibility of the New Colleague coordinators, currently Phil Hotchkiss (photchkiss@wsc.ma.edu) and Chris Aubuchon (Christopher.Aubuchon@jsc.edu). These sessions typically occur Saturday morning.

g) **Breaks**: Typically there is a thirty minute break on Saturday mornings which gives people an opportunity to socialize and view exhibits. Sometimes there is a break on Friday afternoons too.

h) **The Business Meeting**: The Business Meeting is scheduled for the half hour before lunch on Saturday. This is a time when general announcements are made to the Section, the treasury report is given, and elections are held.

i) **Student Workshop**: Usually at the fall meeting, there has been a special workshop/presentation designed for students. Generally, others are also welcome to attend, but something should be scheduled simultaneously. The presenter has sometimes also given a general talk. The student workshop has been less of a fixture in fall programs recently, but it would be a good tradition to maintain.

j) **Contributed Paper Sessions**: Publicizing and organizing these sessions is the responsibility of the Contributed Papers coordinators, currently Eric Johnson (Eric.C.Johnson@uscga.edu). These sessions typically occur on Saturday afternoon. The Contributed Paper Sessions run in parallel sessions.

Major Lectures

a) **The Christie Lecture**: This is the featured lecture of the **fall meeting**. The Christie Lecturer, a well-known, excellent speaker who will appeal to a wide audience of mathematicians, will be invited by the Section Chair in consultation with the Program Committee. The customary times for the Christie Lecture are Friday evening after the banquet or in the middle of Saturday morning. The Christie Lecturer should be consulted for his or her preference on when (s)he will speak. There should be no competing talk or workshop.

b) **The Battles Lecture**: This is the featured lecture of the **spring meeting**. The Battles Lecturer, a well-known, excellent speaker who will appeal to a wide audience of mathematicians, will be invited by the Section Chair in consultation with the Program Committee. The customary times for the Battles Lecture are Friday evening after the banquet or in the middle of Saturday morning. The Battles Lecturer should be consulted

for his or her preference on when (s)he will speak. There should be no competing talk or workshop.

c) **The Distinguished Teacher Lecture**: At the **fall meeting**, the Section's Distinguished Teaching Award winner gives a talk. This could be scheduled at a variety of times: late Friday afternoon, Friday evening, or Saturday morning. The Distinguished Teacher should be consulted for his or her preference on when (s)he will speak. There should be no competing talk or workshop.

d) **The Section Visitor's Lecture:** Each year we can have one of the national officers come to speak at one of our Section meetings with all travel expenses paid by the national MAA, not the Section. The list of speakers and their possible topics can be found on the MAA website, http://www.maa.org/sections/NationalOfficersSpeakers.html. The Section Visitor should not only speak but should take part in all aspects of the meeting including attending talks, participating in the Executive and Business Meetings, and attending the Friday evening banquet and Saturday luncheon.

e) **The Editor's Lecture**: On a rotating basis, Sections can apply to have one of the six editors of the five leading journals to speak at a meeting. The Northeaster Section will be eligible to request an Editor Lecturer during the 2011-2012 academic year. The expenses for the Editor's Lecture are covered by the national MAA.

f) **The Pólya Lecture:** On a rotating basis, Sections can apply to have an MAA Pólya Lecturer speak at a meeting. The Northeastern Section will be eligible to request Pólya Lecturer during the 2014-2015 academic year. The expenses for Pólya Lecturers are also covered by the national MAA.

Costs and Budgetary Restrictions

In designing the program, the committee should be mindful of costs. Conferences are expected to be self-funding. The registration and meal fees are waived for all invited speakers. Invited speakers from within the Section generally cover their own travel and lodging costs, although the Section will cover the cost of a dorm room (spring meeting only). Invited speakers from outside the Section also cover their own travel and lodging costs if possible, but if this is not possible then the Section covers them. When contacting speakers, the issue of travel expenses should be directly addressed and there should be an explicit agreement in writing before the meeting as to what the Section is covering. Generally the phrasing, "If your institution is unable to reimburse your travel expenses, please contact me. A limited amount of funding may be available for this purpose" works well. The **combined total costs** for speakers' travel expenses should be less than $800 per meeting. So, depending on the amount of travel expenses of each speaker, we are generally limited to at most one or two speakers from outside the Section. Invited speakers are not charged for registration, meals, or a dorm room in the spring. The Section does not pay honoraria for speakers at Section Meetings.

Additional Suggestions

The following provide some additional suggestions, ideas and parameters for Section Meeting programs.

1. The most important goal for a Program Committee is to find good speakers and presenters who will talk on subjects **of interest to a wide variety of members** of the Section, including two year college faculty, and undergraduate and graduate students.

2. A good program will have healthy balance between mathematical and pedagogical presentations. A mixture of presentations and workshops is also desirable. A mix of speakers, male and female, junior and senior, established and unestablished, is important.

3. Some program committees have found it helpful to organize the program around some theme, but each program committee can decide whether or not to do that. (This has not been done recently.) It is important for the theme to appeal to a wide audience. If the theme is too narrow, then number of speakers will be few as the speakers' topics will be too specialized. Consequently, attendance during the meeting will most likely be low.