

Hosting EEB Seminars

On-line Seminars

1. Hosts shall arrange academic meetings for the speaker with interested MSU faculty and students. Meetings can be scheduled at the discretion of the speaker's availability but typically occur the day of the seminar. In a recent student survey, a student/speaker lunch was voted as a preference meeting should the speaker be available. As an alternative meeting based on the speaker's preference, an after seminar "Social Hour" with the students can be schedule.

2. Introduce the speaker and perform other moderator functions at the speaker's presentation. You, as host, along with the speaker are responsible for checking out presentation 15 minutes prior to Zoom meeting.

In Person Seminars

These instructions summarize the sorts of things that hosts should plan for, and to mention current policies on certain financial matters. The EEB Seminar Committee will appreciate it if hosts look after all "hostly" responsibilities. Please let us know how we can help.

The EEB Director's Office and the EEB Seminar Committee assume the responsibilities of obtaining commitments from speakers, arranging dates for their visits, arranging housing, advertising talks, booking places and times for talks, providing refreshments at talks, providing audiovisual support, arranging funding and co-funding, and handling the paperwork for reimbursements.

Here is a list of things the host should do or make sure are done by others:

1. Pick up the speaker at the airport if necessary and return to the airport.
2. Introduce the speaker and perform other moderator functions at the speaker's presentation. Be certain to bring speaker to seminar room with ample time to set-up LCD projector or slide projector. Do not arrive at the last minute and expect the seminar aide to set-up projector system. You, as host, along with the speaker are responsible for checking out projector system especially if speaker brings his/her own laptop. In the past we have frequently encountered compatibility problems when the speaker brings a personal laptop. We inform the speaker in advance to bring a backup of visuals. The seminar room (1420 BPS) is equipped with a PC computer and LCD projector. Your cooperation on this issue will reduce the chances of projection problems, the bête noire of any seminar presentation.

3. Arrange academic visits for the speaker with interested MSU faculty and students, As well as meals and other social events.

Speakers will have a pizza lunch with EEB graduate students and postdocs from 12:30-1:30 p.m. in the BEACON seminar room in BPS. EEB will provide lunch but please make sure that the speaker arrives to BEACON by 12:30 p.m. We strongly encourage you to communicate with EEB graduate and postdocs to ensure a good showing. We do not know how many students to expect (hopefully a lot!) so will plan to have enough food for ten people (and will adjust as needed).

Meetings with the speaker between 1:30-3:00 p.m. are welcome to take place in BEACON common areas so that the speaker does not need to travel before their 3:30 p.m. talk. Please let Barbara know if you would like to reserve the BEACON conference room during that time. If you do move to another space, please stay close to BPS so the speaker does not need to run around before their talk. We encourage you to leave the half hour before the seminar (3-3:30p.m.) open for the speaker to relax a bit.

There will be a social hour immediately following each seminar in the BEACON common areas. EEB will provide drinks and snacks. We would like all hosts and speakers to attend before dinner to have a chance to chat informally with members of our community.

For more detailed information on organizing and scheduling a speaker's visit, please see the (very good) advice offered by Heather Eisthen at the end of this message.

4. Arrange for all transportation around campus and around town.

Please bear in mind that only the EEB Seminar Committee can obligate funds from the EEB seminar budget. The Committee has voted unanimously in these hard budgetary times to maximize the use of available funds for bringing speakers to campus and minimize their use for food and drink. The Committee wants to hear how it can help, but without special arrangements, the following policy applies:

Per speaker, the Committee will pay for a few faculty and/or graduate student meals at restaurant gatherings up to a maximum total of \$40 for breakfast and lunch and \$100 for supper. No exceptions! Please note that one of the best ways to involve graduate students in meals are to patronize eating establishments where the cost is modest. Bar bills should be kept separate from food bills; alcohol is non-reimbursable! Open house receptions for EEB speakers are very welcome, but no financial reimbursement is possible. We have been reimbursing a few select open house the past couple of years.

Contact Barbara Bloemers ahead of time with any questions about finances and reimbursements. Also, all original receipts (credit card receipts must include the itemized meal receipt) for reimbursement should be submitted directly to Barbara as soon as possible after the speaker leaves MSU.

HOSTING EEB SPEAKERS

Checklist of tasks

1. Two to three weeks before the speaker comes to campus, start working on scheduling the speaker's time on campus. Send him/her an email asking the following questions:

- are there people on campus that s/he would particularly like to meet with?
- does s/he have special dietary needs or any other constraints that we should keep in mind?
- if there will be a reception at someone's house, find out if the host has cats or dogs, or smokes; if so, be sure to ask the speaker if s/he has allergies to any of these.
- would the speaker like to have dinner or a drink the night s/he arrives, or just go to the hotel?
- what type of projector(s) or other AV equipment will s/he need for the talk?
- how much time would s/he like to have free immediately before the seminar itself?
- would s/he like to see the room or test the equipment earlier in the day, or before the seminar?

2. About 10 days before the speaker arrives, send an email (through Barbara Bloemers; eeb@msu.edu) to people in EEB asking if they would like to meet with the speaker. In this email, you should include:

- the speaker's full name and affiliation
- the title of the talk
- the date, time, and place of the talk
- a brief description of the speaker's research, including a URL for a lab or department website that gives a fuller description of the speaker's research program
- your own full name, email address, and phone number

In this same email, you should include a deadline (about 2-4 days away) for notifying you that the recipient would like to meet with the speaker. Ask anyone who is interested in meeting with the speaker to reply by that deadline with the following information:

- their phone number and preferred email address
- a list of times they have available to meet the speaker
- determine how much time they would like for a visit
- the building and room number where they would ideally like to meet with the speaker

You should also send this email to any other groups on campus with members who might be interested in meeting with the speaker

3. About 5 days before the speaker's talk, you should send emails advertising the talk to any groups other than EEB that include people who might want to attend. In this email, include the following information:

- the speaker's full name and affiliation
- the title of the talk
- the date, time, and place of the talk
- a brief description of the speaker's research, including a URL for a lab or department website that gives a fuller description of the speaker's research program

4. About a week before the speaker arrives, you should be organizing the speaker's schedule. Depending how many people are lined up to meet with the speaker, you may have to construct a few small groups of people to meet with the speaker simultaneously. Try to arrange it such that the speaker does not have to run back and forth across campus; give people with nearby offices adjacent appointments when possible. Give higher priority to EEB members than to people from other programs and give higher priority to the needs of students and postdocs than to faculty members. You may want to reserve mealtimes for students and postdocs. Do not forget to schedule time for yourself!

5. For speakers arriving for Thursday talks, you should have the schedule in semi-final form the previous Monday. Email the tentative schedule to every person on the schedule, as well as the speaker and Barbara Bloemers. Be sure to make careful arrangements to have the speaker escorted from one appointment to the next. Usually, it is reasonable to ask each person meeting with the speaker simply to escort him/her to the next appointment on the schedule, but do not assume this will happen unless you have sent around explicit instructions to do so. In case the schedule is disrupted, be sure to include phone numbers and email addresses of everyone on the schedule.

6. By Monday afternoon before the speaker's talk, you should have straightened out any problems with the schedule. Send the final copy to the speaker, Barbara Bloemers, and everyone who is scheduled for an appointment. Bring an extra copy to the airport to hand to the speaker.

7. The day before the speaker is to arrive, send a brief email confirming that you will meet him/her at the airport. If you have never met, send a photo or a link to a URL with your photo, or at least describe yourself and what you will be wearing, so that s/he can recognize you; also, look for a photo on a website to see what the speaker looks like.

Things to keep in mind

- In mass mailings, do not send notices as email attachments; many people throw them away unopened to avoid virus problems, or because it is a pain to open them. Whenever possible, send schedules and announcements in the body of your email. If you must send an attachment, convert it to a PDF file prior to mailing.
- The speaker is busy. Try to be efficient, and to minimize the number of your phone calls or emails, particularly those that require a response
- If the speaker's desires and the program's desires conflict, try to accommodate the speaker first

- In planning a schedule for the speaker, you need to strike a balance: you do not want to leave him/her hanging for long periods with nothing to do, but you do not want to overwork the speaker or take up every waking moment. In general, if the speaker arrives on the evening before his/her talk is scheduled, you should arrange to pick her/him up at the airport and have dinner or a drink with her/him. You should arrange breakfast, lunch, and dinner or reception on the day of the seminar, but you should also give the speaker time to unwind sometime during the day (usually before dinner/reception). In your scheduling, allow plenty of time for meals (at least 90 minutes for breakfast or lunch) and for transporting the speaker between meetings or events. You also need to arrange to get the speaker back to the airport at the end of the visit. Remember that speakers coming from western time zones may want to get a late start in the morning; ask the speaker what s/he prefers regarding breakfast, start times, and breaks.
- Every visit, and every speaker, is slightly different than all the others. These comments are merely intended as general guidelines.