

Lecture Series Committee  
March 2018

Guidelines for Planning an Event on Campus

**Purpose:**

This document is meant to serve as a helpful tool when planning an event on campus. There are specific considerations that should be kept in mind when organizing a conference or bringing in a guest speaker to the University of Mississippi. Organizing a conference can be a challenging experience because of all the logistical elements that need to be considered when planning. The Lecture Series has compiled a list of things we suggest you consider when beginning the process of planning an event. This event could come in many different forms such as a guest speaker, a performance, a conference, or an exhibition (to name a few). Over the years, the Lecture Series has assisted with the funding of various events on campus and looks forward to continuing that in years to come.

**Process for applying for funds from the Lecture Series:**

1. The application form is available online here:  
<http://www.olemiss.edu/info/committee/?id=10858676&n=LECTURE%20SERIES> .
2. The goal of the University Lecture Series funds is to provide supplemental funding to fill the gap between total projected costs and what other constituencies can provide. Generally speaking, the University Lecture Series wants to see that you have commitments from other constituencies on campus before you apply. In addition to your own department, you can look to support from other departments on campus, from the Dean's office for your college, and from the office of the Provost. You will want to go through your department chair for any funding requests from the dean or above.
3. State wide funding agencies include the Mississippi Humanities Council  
<http://www.mshumanities.org/>, and the Mississippi Arts Commission  
<http://www.arts.ms.gov/> .
4. Funding from the Lecture Series is apportioned on a first-come, first-served basis. The earlier in the academic year that you submit your request, the better your chances of getting funding. Since applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, it is possible the Lecture Series will run out of money towards the end of the year.
5. You should **submit your request at least four weeks in advance of the event** to allow the committee time to approve the request and complete processing. The faculty member will be notified that the award was granted or declined, no later than two weeks after the request.

**Planning**

**Step One: Inviting a speaker.**

- 1) Per the requirements of the university, generally no visiting speakers are paid in advance. They all have to pay for all expenses associated with travel and then be reimbursed after the service has been performed.
- 2) Specify as many of the key details as possible in advance to your visitor - for example, the format of their event (public lecture, workshop, keynote speaking at a conference). It is important to spell out whether the event is restricted (for example, to registered conference participants) or whether it is free and open to the public.

- 3) Inform the speaker if there will be an honorarium provided.
- 4) Upon request you might be asked to provide an official invitation on university letterhead, in order to justify release from their work commitments or for getting travel funds from their host institution. As a rule, it is best to provide an official invitation to everyone you bring in.
- 5) All speakers, who are receiving funds, must sign a W-9 form so that he or she can get reimbursed and/or get an honorarium.

### **Step Two: Scheduling**

The University of Mississippi is a very busy campus. Here are some tips to avoid schedule conflicts.

- 1) These are a few times of the year you should be aware of:

Fall:

Football Season:

<http://www.olemisssports.com/sports>

Southern Foodways Conference:

<https://www.southernfoodways.org/sfa-events/>

Spring:

Double Decker weekend: <http://doubledeckerfestival.com/>

Baseball: <http://www.olemisssports.com/sports/m-basebl>

Other resources:

Oxford City website: <http://www.oxfordms.net/>

- 2) Avoid both the first week and the last week of classes in both semesters. These are unusually busy times both for students and for your fellow professors.
- 3) Many students leave campus for the weekend or otherwise start early. If you want to have student involvement, you might avoid anything Friday afternoon.
- 4) On Tuesdays and Thursdays, there is a window of free time on the academic classroom schedule: 12:15-1:00. That can be a good time to schedule a drop-in lunch gathering.

### **Step Three: Accommodations**

There are several options in Oxford and the surrounding area.

- 1) There is a hotel on campus, the Inn at Ole Miss <http://www.theinnatolemiss.com/>. It is conveniently located and will bill your department directly.
- 2) Sometimes your guest speaker has to spend a night in a hotel outside of town - for example, in Memphis due to flying in late or departing early. Check with your chair on how you want to handle that expense.
- 3) If your visitor is driving in, you will need to get parking passes through your department. The pass is a hangtag that will need to be mailed to the visitor, so make sure you either allow plenty of time for the pass to be mailed or arrange for the visitor to pick it up when they arrive on campus.

- 4) More specific regulations regarding the reimbursement of invited guests can be found at the procurement services website. <http://procurement.olemiss.edu/travel/>

#### **Step Four: Securing a venue**

Now that you have a speaker, you have to figure out where he or she will speak.

- 1) Almost all big lecture halls are in use every day from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If you want a venue somewhere other than in your department's devoted classroom space, go through the Box Office at The Student Union <http://olemissboxoffice.com/>. They schedule the big lecture halls across the entire campus.
- 2) The E.F. Yerby Conference Center is connected to the Inn at Ole Miss and can be a great venue. <http://www.theinnatolemiss.com/>.
- 3) It is always a good idea to check all audiovisual equipment prior to the start of your event. There is a hotline for AV services. <http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/it/getstarted.html#facstaff>
- 4) Food for events can be arranged through various catering companies throughout town or on campus. Ole Miss Catering: <http://olemiss.campusdish.com/Catering.aspx>

#### **Step Five: Publicity and Advertising**

We want to know about your event. Here are some tips on generating publicity.

- 1) University of Mississippi:
  - a. College of Liberal Arts: Contact Elaine Abadie in the College of Liberal Arts and they will publicize if it is for the college.
  - b. UM Today: enter announcements yourself via *myolemiss*
  - c. DM : <http://smc.olemiss.edu/daily-mississippian/>
  - d. Media and Public Relations department:
  - e. <http://communications.olemiss.edu/public-relations/>
- 2) Town: Oxford Eagle <http://www.oxfordeagle.com/> : for art-related events contact The Yoknapatawpha Arts Council <http://www.oxfordarts.com>
  - a. Statewide: MPB radio <http://www.mpbonline.org/more/about/contact/>
- 3) Acknowledge your sponsors in any published or online materials. When you introduce the speaker, please mention support received from the Lecture Series Committee.

#### **Step Six: Entertaining guests**

Dinner with your speaker is often the highlight of the visit. Here are some tips.

- 1) Many of the best restaurants in town require a reservation, especially for a large group. Plan ahead.
- 2) If you are using a departmental or university credit card, declare to your server at the restaurant that the meal is tax free. Otherwise, you will have to fill out paperwork to get reimbursed for the taxes you paid. The University will pay only for the listed value of the food. If you are using a personal credit card, the taxes will be reimbursed.
- 3) Try to keep the cost of the food below \$30 per person, excluding the tip and taxes. If the subtotal for the dinner bill comes in at \$30 or more per person, you will need to apply to the Provost for an exemption from the policy. If you are not exempted, the meal will not be paid for fully.
- 4) The tip cannot be more than 20% of the subtotal before tax.
- 5) University regulations prohibit paying for alcohol. If any alcohol is purchased at dinner, it must be put on a separate tab and paid for either out of the pockets of the diners or out of a special departmental fund.
- 6) Make sure to save the receipts from all meals. All receipts must be itemized.
- 7) Keep and submit a list of everyone who ate at the meal for the guest.

### **Step Seven: Obtaining funds from the University Lecture Series.**

- 1) Once your event is over, you will need to submit a report form indicating what kind of activities happened at the event, how many people came to the event, and how the University lecture series helped make the event successful. This report form will need to be submitted and signed by your chair **no later than eight weeks after the event**. Otherwise, you and the other members of your department may become ineligible for future funding from the lecture series. Here is the report form:  
<http://olemiss.edu/aboutum/standingcommittees>.
- 2) All expenses must be invoiced and sent to Leah Hanks [lhanks@olemiss.edu](mailto:lhanks@olemiss.edu) so that funds can be transferred. This does not have to take place at the end of the event but the invoice needs to be evident.