

Speakers and Events

The intellectual life of the College is enriched by visits of many lecturers, performers, and groups who are invited by various organizations within the institution, including departments and programs. Many departments are the beneficiaries of endowed lectureships, while others have lines in their annual budgets to support speakers or artists. Another source of funding for speakers and performers primarily brought by departments and programs is the Faculty Lectureships Committee, which has funded a significant number of “modest speaker” proposals each year for the past decade. Chairs should coordinate these activities for their departments.

Inviting speakers or scheduling major events (panel discussions, readings, and so forth) has both budgetary dimensions and scheduling considerations. In this section of the handbook we provide some guidance on each, but with an emphasis on scheduling. We include a document that outlines the principles by which the scheduling of events should be guided at Kenyon as well as a longer document on the procedures used to schedule events of various types. We reprint last year’s call for Modest Proposals to Faculty Lectureships and an example of the form used to make those proposals. At the bottom of this page is a short statement from Susan Spaid, Director of Cultural Events, to which we call your attention.

Regarding the financing of speakers and other events, we especially encourage those not experienced at staging events with outside speakers to consult Susan Spaid on the likely set of costs associated with a particular type of event. Chairs or other faculty members can easily make a promise to a speaker of an honorarium that is too large considering the overall budget that can be allocated to the event. Be sure to review the probable costs of transportation (including to and from the airport both here and at the speaker’s home location), entertainment, and incidentals (meals for the speaker during transit) as well as any materials and publicity (printing posters) costs associated with mounting the event here before deciding on an honorarium.

Please note that events with outside speakers or performers must be cleared by Susan Spaid to avoid scheduling conflicts prior to making any offer to the speaker. Other events likely to draw a significant audience should also be vetted by Susan to limit scheduling conflicts.

Scheduling and Hosting Outside Speakers and Events at Kenyon College

In recent years, the number of invited guests has proliferated. The more speakers who come to campus, the more challenging it is to ensure that your time and college money is well spent for each event. When you begin to plan to bring an outside speaker, visiting artist or performer to campus and before you invite the speaker or suggest possible dates for a visit, please contact Susan Spaid first (X5650, spaid@kenyon.edu). She will check to be sure that the date you are considering is clear of conflicts. A primary goal is to avoid the embarrassment and waste of scheduling two major speakers on the same evening and also to ensure that your event attracts a respectable size audience. For anyone new to the College or hosting a speaker for the first time, Susan can also advise you about budgets, venues, timelines, and procedures.

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