University of Pittsburgh
Division of Student Affairs

Event Scheduling Guidelines

Preface

The University of Pittsburgh affirms the constitutional rights of its community members. Freedom of thought, speech, assembly and expression are integral to the holistic development of each student. These freedoms are necessary to foster a diverse educational experience for each student, regardless of race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information or marital, veteran, familial, or disability status. In alignment with our values as an institution, the University supports student organizations in their pursuit to provide programs, speakers, and opportunities for intellectual conversation, discourse, and ultimately learning.

Guidelines

The following guidelines should assist student organizations as they invite speakers to campus and plan for successful events. To best ensure a safe and successful presentation or event, please review the Registration Guidelines or seek advice from the Student Organization Resource Center (SORC) or appropriate building management. Please note that only student organizations registered with the Division of Student Affairs are eligible to use University facilities, equipment, and services.

Pre-Event Considerations

1. <u>Event Checklist</u>. Student organizations should begin by completing and submitting to SORC the Program Planning Checklist and required University-approved contract. University-approved guest speaker contracts are required for all on-campus guest speakers or live performance events sponsored by student organizations.

2. <u>Security</u>.
   a. Keeping with the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for its faculty, staff, students and guests, student organizations intending to invite a speaker or performer to campus (hereinafter, hosting organization) should anticipate the need for security in advance of the event. University officials shall determine whether an event requires security by evaluating factors, such as but not limited to, anticipated audience size, location of the event, access level to the event (open to the University community, ticketed, invitation only), health and safety concerns, other events taking place on campus, prior security concerns at

the speaker's or performer's past presentations at any location, and any recommendations by the University of Pittsburgh Police.

b. The hosting organization(s) is responsible for any and all security costs. The hosting organization(s) should contact the University of Pittsburgh Police to schedule security staffing and obtain cost information.

c. All event security requirements will be subject to review by the Dean of Students or their designee. The Dean or their designee may increase the security based upon the above-noted factors; because increased security is necessary to help protect the rights of members of the University community; and/or to help ensure the normal functioning of the University.

3. <u>Identification</u>. The hosting organization or the University may request attendees present valid university identification for admission. If university identification is required for attendance, the hosting organization shall publicize the requirement prior to the event and shall consistently require all attendees of the event to produce valid university identification.

4. <u>Venue</u>. If the event is scheduled for either the William Pitt Union (WPU), O'Hara Student Center (OSC), or other venues scheduled by the WPU Reservations Office, the hosting organization should review the security guidelines related to these venues. These guidelines can be found at: https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/studentunions. If any other location is being used, check security requirements for that particular location. The University maintains the right to define time, place and manner in which activities may occur on campus.

Pre-Event: Advertisement

1. Hosting organizations are encouraged to advertise scheduled events. Such advertisement should identify the event's purpose and the event's sponsors and/or co-sponsors.

2. The University encourages hosting organizations to include the following disclaimer in all advertisements related to a speaker event:

> *"The University of Pittsburgh embraces its role to foster a diverse educational experience for all students through the free expression and exchange of ideas. The use of a University facility for this event does not necessarily constitute an endorsement by the University of any speaker, presentation, content or expressed viewpoint."*

Hosting organizations also may consider issuing a written or verbal statement that the scheduled event may contain material that does not align with beliefs and perspectives of those who attend.

Pre-Event: Categories

1. Open Event. An event funded in whole or in part by student activity fees shall be open to all University of Pittsburgh students who pay the corresponding activity fee. The hosting organization, at its discretion, may allow other Pitt community members and the public-at-large to attend an open event. The hosting organization also may offer priority access to students, followed by other Pitt community members (faculty and staff), and then the general public.

Recording of the program, whether audio or video, is determined by the guest speaker or event performance agreement which is executed with the hosting organization prior to the event.

For more information about the undergraduate Student Government Board allocation policies, please refer to Section 5B of the Student Government Board Allocations Manual, which can be found at: SGB Allocations Manual.

2. Private Event. Private events are funded in whole or in part by the student activity fee where the hosting organization elects to limit the audience to University of Pittsburgh students.

3. Closed Event. Closed events are not funded by the student activity fee. Under these circumstances, the hosting organization may limit the event to its own members, or an audience of its own choosing, in accordance with the law and University policies and procedures.

Considerations During Event: Participant Engagement

1. *Expression and Dissent*. The speaker's right of expression and the audience's right to listen take precedence. While students are encouraged to maintain an open mind during a speaker's presentation, there may be instances where attendees will not agree with the spoken or displayed viewpoint of the speaker. This notion is why free speech must be protected for every student and member of the University community. Students may dissent peacefully during the event. However, if the dissent interferes with any audience member's ability to hear or view the speaker, impedes the ability of the audience to move freely, or causes or threatens to cause imminent harm to the audience, speaker or the University community at-large, police and/or University staff may intervene and reposition or remove offending person(s) from the event. Behavior that violates the law or the University's Student Code of Conduct may result in arrest and/or the issuance of sanctions by the University. In addition, nothing herein restricts the University from responding appropriately to obscenity, fighting words, defamation (includes libel and slander), child pornography, incitement to imminent lawless action, true threats or solicitations to commit crimes.

Peaceful, orderly, and nondestructive picketing, protests, and demonstrations, include but are not limited to:

2. *Picketing / Literature*. Picketing in an orderly way or distributing literature outside the meeting is acceptable so long as it does not impede access to the meeting. Distributing literature inside an open meeting is acceptable before the meeting is called to order and after the meeting is adjourned. Signs attached to rigid supports or frames are prohibited inside campus buildings. No activities shall impede pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic nor unreasonably disrupt regular or authorized activities in classrooms, offices, laboratories and other University facilities or grounds.

3. *Silent or Symbolic Protest*. Protesting noiselessly, such as displaying a sign, wearing clothing, gesturing, or standing, is acceptable so long as the protest does not interfere with the audience's view or prevent the audience from hearing or listening to the speaker. Any use of signs, prolonged standing, or other activity likely to block the view of anyone in the audience must be positioned in the back or along the sides of the room, if space is available

4. *Noise*. Chanting or making other sustained or repeated noise in a manner which substantially interferes with the speaker's communication is not permitted, whether inside or outside the meeting. Noise making devices are prohibited.

5. *Force or Violence*. Using or threatening force or violence, such as defacing a sign or assailing a speaker or a member of the audience, is never permitted.

6. *Enforcement*. University Police and/or University staff may reposition and/or remove any person who impedes the ability of attendees to view, hear, or participate in the speaker event, or who possibly violates the law or the Student Code of Conduct. Conditions that may lead to such intervention include, but are not limited to:
   a. Any verbal or nonverbal action that disrupts the speaker's ability to present their message and the audience's ability to receive the message;
   b. Any verbal or nonverbal action that interferes with or impedes the movement of those in attendance, or the speaker(s);
   c. Any verbal or nonverbal action that causes or threatens to cause injury to any attendee, the speaker(s), or property;
   d. Any verbal or nonverbal action that impacts the imminent health or safety of attendees, the speaker(s), or the University community-at-large.

Question and Answer (Q&A) Session

All invited speaker events should include a reasonable amount of time for audience members to ask questions. The Q&A session provides an opportunity for audience members to develop and ask appropriate, affirming and dissenting questions and the opportunity to debate the presented viewpoint. The University recommends that hosting organizations carefully plan the question and answer facilitation.

When selecting a method for Q & A, the hosting organization should consider:

1. Whether asking questions should be open to all in attendance through an "open microphone" forum, or;

2. Whether a facilitator should walk around holding a microphone, or;
3. Whether questions should be submitted in writing, which the speaker and/or a moderator would sort, select, and read.

In all situations, the Q&A session should be moderated by a member of the hosting organization or its designee.

Assistance and Accountability

When hosting an event or speaker on campus, registered student organizations are required to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws as well as University policies and procedures. The University will hold hosting organizations accountable for any failure to comply with such laws, policies, procedures or other conditions agreed to during the event registration and management process. Such potential consequences may include, but are not limited to, loss of funding and loss of SORC registration status for a determined period of time.

Summary

The University encourages student organizations to consider the content of these guidelines prior to scheduling of a speaker event. Such consideration should include student organization member discussion, as well as discussion with University staff. Such pre-event discussion will increase the probability that the event will run smoothly and be a productive event. Additionally, such discussion will ensure that all University of Pittsburgh students throughout their college years will have the opportunity to experience and learn from presentations that represent varied, diverse, and controversial viewpoints.