

Guide for Hosting Meetings of the MAA Seaway Section

January 16, 2025

This chronological list includes the stages that go into planning an MAA Seaway Section meeting (spring or fall). Note that most of the tasks listed here are those that the local host would engage in; the program chair and other section officers engage in other tasks that are often “behind the scenes” and are in support of the local host. Having a single point of contact between the host institution and the program chair aids in efficient, clear communication but the local host is encouraged to delegate and share the responsibilities and tasks among a committee or group of volunteer organizers.

Checklist

Note that the time frames provided on this checklist are optimal — unforeseen events can result in a much more cramped timeline than this checklist may suggest.

At least 1 year before the meeting

- ☐ The Committee on Venues determines the host institution, generally more than one year ahead of the meeting. The host institution must agree to support the meeting financially and with the needed personnel before any planning begins. A member of the host institution must agree to serve as the local organizer — the main contact person responsible for interactions with the Seaway Chair and Program Chair in matters related to the meeting.
- ☐ The local organizer’s contact information must be forwarded to the Section Chair and Program Chair.
- ☐ The local organizer sets tentative dates for the meetings, in collaboration with the department and university.
- ☐ The local host checks the University Calendar for possible conflicts, such as major sporting events, conferences, holidays, and University programs (e.g., Thanksgiving, Easter services, Homecoming, Parents’ Weekend).
- ☐ The local host consults dining services for dates; dining services must accommodate at least Saturday breakfast and lunch.
- ☐ The local host checks with the Seaway Chair about proposed dates before making a firm decision.
- ☐ Confirm off-campus hotel availability for Friday evening banquet guests if applicable.
- ☐ Send confirmed dates (and location if an off-campus venue is being used for Friday evening) to the Seaway Chair and Program Chair.

At least 9 months before the meeting

- Section officers determine Saturday invited speakers (not the responsibility of the host institution).
 - The Randolph (Fall) or Gehman (Spring) Lecture Committee invites a speaker. Once the invitation is accepted and confirmed, the details (name, affiliation, email address) are forwarded to the Program Chair for publicity and session planning purposes.
 - The Program Committee invites speakers for the opening and closing talks, confirming their details for the Program Chair.
- The local host determines the Friday evening speaker:
 - Invite and confirm a speaker for the Friday evening banquet.
 - Send details (name, affiliation, email address) to the Program Chair.
 - Assist with travel and lodging arrangements for the speaker. Cover associated costs, including an honorarium.
 - Arrange any necessary technology for the speaker.
- The local host reserves spaces on campus:
 - Workshop Friday afternoon: 2-5pm (approximately 25-30 people, computer lab if necessary).
 - Executive and Ext. Exec. Committee meeting: Friday 3-5:30/6pm (14 people, preferably around a table).
 - Friday evening:
 - Registration area near the social hour and banquet room.
 - Social hour: 6-7pm near or in the banquet room (cash bar optional).
 - Banquet: 7-8pm for 50-100 attendees.
 - Banquet speaker: 8-9pm in the banquet room.
 - Post-banquet activities: 9-10:30pm in the banquet room.
 - Saturday:
 - Registration area: open 15-30 minutes before the first talk.
 - Large lecture hall for 150 participants: 8:30am-11am.
 - 4-6 classrooms (25-50 people) for parallel sessions: 11 - 12pm.
 - 4 - 6 classrooms (25-50 people) for parallel sessions: 1:30 - 3:30pm.
 - Closing keynote lecture hall (100 - 150 people): 3pm - 5pm.

Note that the space needs on Saturday are largely dependent on how many contributed and student sessions are needed to accommodate the abstract submissions, which have a deadline approximately 3 weeks before the meeting. Reserving more rooms for parallel sessions is a safe plan.

- ☐ The local host arranges for adequate parking on Friday and Saturday. Be aware that parking permits may be required on Friday during the day; if so, work with the program chair to ensure that these permits are delivered to the necessary workshop and meeting participants.

At least 6 months in advance

- ☐ Program chair and webmaster create a website for the meeting with the following:
 - Meeting dates, location, and directions.
 - Campus map and parking information.
 - Lodging options and special rates.
 - Downloadable poster for publicity.
 - Program details, speaker information, and schedules (to be updated).
 - Registration form with online payment option.

Note that the local host provides much of this information to the program chair.

- ☐ The local host reserves blocks of rooms at local hotels and forward details to the Program Chair.
- ☐ The local host determines Friday banquet menu with vegetarian and dietary restriction options and conveys that information to the program chair.
- ☐ The local host plans food for Saturday (continental breakfast, lunch, snacks) with dietary accommodations.
- ☐ The local host sets deadlines for registration for the Friday banquet and the Saturday lunch and conveys these deadlines to the program chair.
- ☐ The local host arranges for a technology team to handle A/V issues during the meeting.
- ☐ The local host identifies a local leader (e.g., President, Provost, Dean) to welcome attendees on Saturday morning.
- ☐ The local host determines whether or not the local institution can support a poster session during the meeting. This information should be shared with the program chair.
- ☐ The program chair works with the Saturday invited speakers to arrange for travel, hotel reservations, etc. If there is a Friday minicourse, the program chair identifies the leader of the minicourse but if there is a Friday Seaway NExT workshop then the Seaway NExT committee organizes the workshop and communicates their needs to the program chair, who then communicates with the local host.

At least 2-3 months in advance

- ☐ The program chair announces the meeting to the Seaway Section, including a call for contributed and student talks and special sessions.
- ☐ The program chair and webmaster finalize and publish the website with all relevant information, including deadlines for participants.
- ☐ The local host confirms arrangements for Friday banquet and Saturday food.
- ☐ The local host confirms room reservations and shares with the Program Chair.

At least 2-3 weeks in advance

- ☐ The local host creates campus signs directing participants to parking and venues. If necessary, the local host and program chair come up with a plan for how to get parking permits to those who need them on Friday afternoon.
- ☐ The local host organizes registration volunteers for Friday evening and Saturday morning.
- ☐ The local host arranges for local volunteers to moderate the Saturday parallel session and communicates with the program chair if additional moderators are needed.
- ☐ The program chair communicates requirements for the Friday evening game to the local host.
- ☐ The program chair arranges for plenary session moderators.
- ☐ The local host arranges for an introduction for the Friday evening banquet speaker.
- ☐ The program chair provides the local host with documents detailing the program and session schedules.
- ☐ The local host oversees the gathering of materials for participant folders.

1 week in advance

- ☐ The local host prepares name tags.
- ☐ The local host oversees the assembling of participant folders, including:
 - program and schedules,
 - speaker information,
 - paper and writing instrument,
 - campus map and optional local information.

During the meeting

- ☐ The local host oversees the registration table, including onsite registration through the online form.
- ☐ The local host welcomes the banquet speaker and ensures that the arrangements for their presentation are suitable.
- ☐ The local host oversees the catering for the Friday evening banquet and Saturday refreshments.
- ☐ The local host provides printed receipts for those participants who require them. Note that this is often individuals who pay by check.
- ☐ The local host informs the program chair of any participants who are not registered through the online form, so that final numbers for participants include those individuals.
- ☐ The local host introduces the chair of the section and the Saturday morning welcomer, ensuring a smooth transition to the plenary session.
- ☐ The local host communicates with participants about parking, wifi, and other directions. Often, student volunteers lead participants from Saturday morning venues to the luncheon facilities.

At the end of the meeting

- ☐ The local host settles finances with the Seaway Section Treasurer.