**BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES SEMINAR SERIES PROCEDURES**

The goal of this document is to streamline procedures for organizing both **invited speakers** and **graduate student presenters** at the BSC Friday seminar series and the **William Darden Lecture**.

*Seminar Information*

**Seminar Committee:** Paige Ferguson (Chair), Gui Becker (Chair-elect), Stephen Secor **Location:** North Lawn 1014 (Fall semester 2019)

**Time:** Fridays 12:00PM – 12:50PM

Note that a class follows the seminar, so speakers are encouraged to keep talks to <50 minutes to allow for questions.

*Strategies for Filling Seminar Series*

1. **Graduate Student Speakers:** The seminar series is intended to allow for MS and PhD students to gain experience presenting their research in a formal setting.

Each student is required to present their research at least once, preferably in the final semester of their program. Approximately 40% of seminar slots will typically be reserved for graduate students, although this varies.

It is the responsibility of the faculty advisor and graduate student to contact that Chair of the Seminar Committee to request a date for their research presentation in the semester prior to the requested date. If that date is presently filled, then alternative dates will be offered for immediate consideration and decision.

1. **Invited Speakers:** In late Spring/early Summer each year the seminar committee will solicit invites for the Fall (and occasionally Spring) semester, and again in early October to fill remaining Spring semester slots. There is no regional restriction on invitations (within the USA), so the goal is to bring in researchers with broadly interesting research programs from throughout the country.

If you are interested in hosting an invited speaker, contact the Chair of the Seminar Committee with the request. The Chair will then provide the dates of open slots and will then “freeze” those dates until a date has been decided. It is then the responsibility of the requesting faculty to secure a date ASAP with their invited speaker so that the other dates can be opened up for other requests. If requests exceed the available slots for invited speakers for a semester, the Chair and committee will consider the following priorities in allocating slots, in addition to suggesting a slot in the following semester.

Priorities for faculty invites are as follows

* 1. Diversity: invited speakers should represent an even composition across MCB and EES
  2. Graduate student invited speaker. The goal is to allow the graduate students to invite one high profile speaker per semester (MCB students Fall, EES in Spring; see *Responsibilities of Faculty/Graduate Student Sponsor*)
  3. Faculty one year from tenure are given priority with the objective to invite potential letter writers (1 seminar slot per academic year per faculty)
  4. First year faculty are given second priority with the objective being to invite potential tenure letter writers, and potential future collaborators (1 seminar slot per academic year per faculty)
  5. Faculty who have not invited a speaker in previous 2 academic years
  6. Speakers from a non-traditional setting in the biological sciences (non-profit, industry, government); this will give students an idea for alternative career paths (1 invitee per academic year, pending available slots)

1. **Tenure and Promotion Talks:** Seminar slots will be reserved for faculty under consideration for tenure or promotion. These will typically be the first few Fridays in Fall semesters, and should be scheduled before invited speakers.

It is the responsibility of the faculty member to request in the beginning of the prior spring semester for a slot early in the following fall semester.

*Funds Available from the Department for Invited Speakers*

1. Hotel (typically a 2 night maximum); if exceeding 2 nights, approval must be granted in advance by the Dept. Chair, or the additional cost will be the responsibility of the faculty sponsor
2. *If invitee arrives by car*: mileage to the seminar invitee at the going rate for reimbursement
3. *If invitee arrives by plane:* airfare (booked through the Department of Biological Sciences; see *Responsibilities of Faculty/Graduate Student Sponsor*) + other transportation (e.g., bus, taxi, shuttle, etc)
4. Lunch for graduate students and invited speaker, if requested in advance, immediately following seminar (location SEC 2438 conference room, or other available room)
5. Meal expenses up to $100. Typically this would include dinner on Thursday, Friday, or both, with the available funds dictating the number of invitees. Costs above this maximum are the responsibility of the faculty host. Note that complementary breakfasts are provided by Home2Suites and Hampton Inn. Breakfast can be purchased at Hotel Capstone

* **Note: The department will not fund alcoholic beverages of any kind**

*Responsibilities of the Seminar Committee*

1. Organize the initial Fall and Spring schedules to ensure that all slots are filled with Graduate Students, Invited Speakers, or T&P Candidates representing BSC diversity
2. Solicit data on faculty approaching T&P to arrange “T&P talks”

* (usually April/May for following Fall)

1. Solicit information from faculty about all students expected to file for graduation in the following semester, and contact individual students to arrange their Finishing Talks

* (usually April/May for following Fall, and September/October for Spring)

1. Solicit invitees from the faculty and graduate students

* (usually April/May for following Fall, and September/October for Spring)

1. Ensure student participation/involvement in the seminar series. The GSA will vote to invite 1 speaker in the MCB area for Fall semesters, and in the EES area for Spring semesters.
2. At the start of the semester, forward the final schedule (names, home department, date of visit, and faculty hosts) to the department website manager for posting: Dr. Kevin Kocot ([kmkocot@ua.edu](mailto:kmkocot@ua.edu)), and to BSC graduate support staff for planning purposes: Catherine Schmandt ([ceschmandt@ua.edu](mailto:ceschmandt@ua.edu)).
3. Interact with faculty sponsors, Department of Biological Sciences staff, and Department Chair to ensure that all information/scheduling/travel is streamlined

*Responsibilities of the Faculty/Graduate Student Sponsor*

1. 8 weeks prior to seminar: Contact invitee and decide on arrival and departure times and flights. Obtain from the invitee full name (as on driver’s license), home address, birth date, and frequent flyer number. Forward this information to Amy Banks ([aebanks1@ua.edu](mailto:aebanks1@ua.edu)). First class booking is not permitted.
2. 8 weeks prior to seminar: Contact Amy Banks ([aebanks1@ua.edu](mailto:aebanks1@ua.edu)) regarding hotel reservations for the speaker. **Note**: an even earlier reservation request may be advisable for Fall semesters if invited speaker comes during a home football game. If you are hosting the speaker at your home, please advise Elizabeth.
3. 2-3 weeks prior to seminar: Arrange the seminar speaker’s schedule. This includes:
   1. Sending out an e-mail to faculty, staff, and graduate students who might be interested in meeting with the invitee, arranging meeting times, and soliciting meal attendees.
   2. Sending email to the graduate students to solicit attendance at the pizza lunch following seminar. Once an estimated number is available, send estimation to Catherine for planning purposes ([ceschmandt@ua.edu](mailto:ceschmandt@ua.edu))
   3. Organize schedule with attention to time necessary to move from building to building. Make sure to identify in schedule who has the responsibility to deliver the speaker to their next meeting (suggested template attached)
4. 2-3 weeks prior to seminar: Solicit the title, abstract (250 word max), and photo (optional) from the invitee in a timely fashion
5. 2 weeks prior to seminar: Forward the title, abstract, and photo to Catherine Schmandt ([ceschmandt@ua.edu](mailto:ceschmandt@ua.edu)) so she can generate and post the seminar flyer (suggested template attached)
6. 2 weeks prior to seminar: Forward the title and abstract to department website manager for posting: Dr. Kevin Kocot ([kmkocot@ua.edu](mailto:kmkocot@ua.edu))
7. Arrange for the seminar speaker to be picked up and dropped off at the airport (if needed)
8. At least 24 hours prior to seminar: Check with Biology Office Staff (Amy Banks [aebanks1@ua.edu](mailto:aebanks1@ua.edu)) that pizza lunch has been arranged and ordered (see attached pizza form)
9. Ensure that the speaker has transportation to campus and back to hotel.
10. Deliver the seminar speaker to the seminar room at least 20 minutes prior to the seminar to set up the audio-visual system and computer
11. If faculty are unable to deliver the speaker to their next meeting engagement, it will be the responsibility of the faculty sponsor (or grad student representative) to do so

*Responsibilities of the seminar invitee:*

1. Send seminar title, short abstract (250 word max) and photo (optional) to the seminar host at least 2 weeks prior to the seminar
2. Forward information on departure city and preferred departure times to the faculty sponsor
3. Bring all travel receipts to the Dept. Biological Sciences staff member responsible for reimbursements (Amy Banks [aebanks1@ua.edu](mailto:aebanks1@ua.edu))
4. Provide information for reimbursements in advance of arrival to UA, when needed

*Responsibilities of Department of Biological Sciences Office Staff:*

Amy Banks ([aebanks1@ua.edu](mailto:aebanks1@ua.edu)): oversee the budgeting aspects of the seminar series, including booking flights and lodging, and handling reimbursements.

Catherine Schmandt ([ceschmandt@ua.edu](mailto:ceschmandt@ua.edu)): Generate and post seminar flyer including title, name of speaker, and abstract. Sends out reminder e-mails at least 24 hours prior to seminar to graduate students, postdocs, faculty, and staff. Ordering pizza for graduate student lunch with seminar speaker.

**William Darden Lecture**

Many of the same responsibilities for hosting a departmental seminar speaker will also hold for hosting a speaker for the annual William Darden Lecture, with the additional steps.

Any faculty member who wishes to suggest/host a William Darden Lecturer should email their suggestion to both the Chair of the Department and Chair of the Seminar Committee. Include in the email the speaker’s name, institution, and a short synopsis of why they would be an appropriate Darden lecturer. The William Darden Lecture is a public lecture and the presentation should be of interest to and appropriate for the general public. Topics of past talks have focused on human health, scientific breakthroughs, the environment, and conservation. Once approved by the chairs of the department and seminar committee, the faculty member can then invite the suggested speaker.

When considering to invite a potential Darden lecturer, you should do so well in advance of the talk (e.g., early spring prior to the talk). Keep in mind that the lecture is held in mid-October on a Thursday evening and the potential logistic difficulties of booking flights and lodging for those weeks of home football games.

Once a date has been confirmed with the speaker, departmental Chair, and seminar committee Chair, the host needs to work with the office staff for booking flights and lodging, and reserving a room on campus that can accommodate a minimum of 200 people. Because we provide an honorarium to the Darden lecturer, the host needs to check with the office (Elizabeth) to make sure that they have obtained the necessary information for payment.

Prior to the start of the fall semester the host should obtain from the speaker the title and lay summary of their talk, and a picture. The host needs to coordinate with Stephanie the producing of a flyer that the office will distributed by email, place in faculty/staff/graduate students’ mailboxes, and mailed to anyone on the department’s mailing, including science departments at UAB, Stillman College, and Shelton State Community College. The host also needs to provide this information to Kevin Kocot to be added to the department’s website.

The host needs to make absolutely sure that the office has invited Dr. Darden, his wife and family, and Ms. Ilouise Hill to the lecture.

At the first faculty meeting of the fall, the host (or Chair) should introduce the speaker and ask faculty to announce the lecture in their classes and to encourage students to attend. The host (or Chair) should do the same if there is a second faculty meeting prior to the lecture.

Three weeks prior to the lecture, the host should work with Stephanie to post an announcement of the lecture on the various on-line UA news/announcement sites (e.g., UA News).

Two-three weeks prior to the lecture, the host needs to send out a schedule of the speaker’s time on campus with available time slots for meetings with faculty. The host will coordinate those meetings along with arrangements for transportation to and from campus and the person(s) responsible for delivering the speaker to their next meeting. In the past due to scheduling constraints, we have foregone the pizza lunch with graduate students. However, if there is sufficient time and interest by both students and the speaker, it can be added to their schedule (see above for schedule a pizza lunch). The host needs to include in the schedule dinner arrangements (for after the lecture) and if necessary make dinner reservations.

If the speaker has recently published a book, the host should ask the speaker if he/she would like to sell copies of their book with a signing. This would occur right after their talk, outside of the lecture room. If books are to be sold, then the host needs to contact the UA bookstore to arrange for the shipping of books and the selling of books after the lecture by bookstore employees. We have done this several times in the past and it has gone quite smoothly.

If the speaker is flying in and out of Birmingham, the host has the responsibility of transporting the speaker from and to the airport, or making arrangements for such.

The host has the responsibility of introducing the speaker prior to the lecture. In the past, the department Chair has begun the lecture by giving opening comments regarding the Darden Lecture and acknowledging the presence of Dr. Darden and the generous contribution of Ms. Hill. If the host also needs to take on that responsibility (e.g., Chair is unable), then speak prior with Dr. Martha Powell. She can fill you in on the history of the lecture and the proper acknowledgements.

As you can see hosting a Darden lecturer requires a bit more effort than hosting a weekly seminar speaker. Foremost important is making sure well in advance that there is a suitably-sized room reserved, that flyers and invitations are sent out, that the lecture is announced in classes and via UA on-line news sites, that flights, lodging, transportation, schedules, and reservations are set, along with any specific requests of the speaker (e.g., book signing). Frequently check with the office to make sure that everything is taken care of. If you get into a bind or have questions, feel free to ask the Chair of the Seminar Committee for assistance.

Name of faculty sponsor (if grad student invitee, insert “GRAD”):

Name of seminar invitee:

Seminar Title:

Arriving by: \_ car \_ plane

*If arriving by car*, has someone forwarded directions to the speaker?  yes  no

*If arriving by plane*, has someone arranged to pick up the speaker at the airport?  yes \_ no

Arrival flight carrier and flight # :

Flight arriving from (departure city) :

Flight arrival date:

Flight arrival time:

Name of person(s) who will pick up speaker:

Hotel accommodations booked? \_ yes \_ no Hotel name: Hampton Inn, # Nights stay:

Hotel confirmation number:

WEDNESDAY PLANS (if any):

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| Start Time | End Time | Meeting With? | Deliver to next Engagement |
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5:00-5:30 pm onwards:

Dinner plans (who, where, what time)?

Bring speaker back to airport (who, what time)?

Departure flight carrier and flight :

Flight departure date:

Flight departure time:

Name of person(s) who will bring speaker to airport:

**Semester:**

**BSC GRADUATE STUDENT LUNCHEONS PIZZA ORDER FORM**

**DATE NEEDED\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ delivered to Biology office by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_am/pm.**

**To expedite food orders for grad luncheon with seminar speaker please complete the following and submit to the BSC budget office (Amy Banks) with 24 hrs of date needed:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of graduate student(s) responsible for picking up pizzas and soda from SEC 1325 (main office) and delivering to assigned lunch room, removing all trash after the lunch, and returning unused soda to office.** | **Seminar Speaker Name (Faculty host)** |
| **Pizza Order Request (list type, number)** | **Names of Grad Students Attending Lunch (Required for BSC budget office)** |

ENTER SEMINAR TITLE HERE

Enter Seminar Speaker’s Name Here

Speaker’s Institution

Date, Time

Location

Copy-Paste Abstract Here

Snazzy Research-Related Picture Here!