

## Checklist for Event Planning:

### Invitation Process:

- Brainstorm type of event and type of speaker
- Write speaker invitations letters on club letterhead with club logo
- Develop template for invitation letters to use in the future
- When inviting the speaker, face to face interactions are best, otherwise mail the letter (include overview of club for background). Follow up with phone call/email.

### Planning Event Logistics:

- Determine topics, structure, time length of event with speaker
- Visit and reserve appropriate room 2-3 weeks in advance (if attendance size is unknown, reserve several rooms)
  - Rooms in the Yard can be reserved by emailing [hcdroom@fas](mailto:hcdroom@fas)
  - Reserve SOCH rooms online: [www.fas.harvard.edu/~soch/index.htm](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~soch/index.htm)
  - Local hotels provide fancy banquet halls for large, formal events, but must be scheduled months in advance
- Reserve technology (projector, screen, laptop, DVD player, speakers etc)
  - For on-campus events, technology can be reserved (free) from Media and Technology Services in the basement of the Science Center (email: [mtsequip@fas](mailto:mtsequip@fas)). First come, first served, so do it in advance.
  - Leave a minimum of 30 minute to set up technology prior to event
- Contact relevant staff (SOCH staff, hotel clerks, or caterers) 10+ days in advance
- Publicize event (email, posters, dining hall table tents, Facebook etc)
- Cater or purchase snacks that are fitting for event (may also include table cloths, flowers, name cards if its an elegant event)
  - Staples is great for name tags and other office supplies for an event
  - Tommy's and CVS have convenient, casual snack foods.
  - Shaw's Grocery in Porter Square can provide snack and fruit plates
  - Finales and Z-Square catering are more elegant and expensive
    - Always request utensils, napkins and plates (this is often complimentary with the order if you ask)
- Gather RSVPs so you can follow-up and email remind participants before the event
- Solicit a biography from any speakers to craft an introduction
- Offer to arrange a cab to meet the speaker; call to confirm with cab company

### At The Event:

- If guest is arriving by car, determine parking and provide simple directions to room location from the speaker's office or parking location.
- Greet the speaker in an easy-to-access location
- Arrive at event location 20-30 minute prior to event so the speaker can settle in, set up presentation, use restroom etc
- Indicate the venue with posters pointing the way (not everyone knows all the JCRs)

- Have a bottle of water for guest
- Indicate a seat for the guest (even if a speaker say s/he will stand, have a chair or stool available)
- Starting the event: thank attendees, introduce self, organization and speaker clearly. Always welcome guest on-stage with applause.
  - A professional introduction will build respect and credibility for the speaker. Don't be modest about his/her accomplishments.
- Give participants feedback cards to collect evaluations of event, if you want feedback
- Before the event begins, determine with the speaker how you'll wrap up the event and whether s/he can stay around for a few minutes after the event.

#### After the Event

- End by thanking the speaker and mention if s/he can stay to take personal questions.
- Present with speaker gift (glasses, mugs, memorabilia, plaque etc)
- Escort the speaker out
- Send personalized hand-written thank you note within 24 hours (be sure to get a mailing address)

#### Additional Tips for Successful Events:

- If your group hosts multiple events, consider buying a banner with your logo from Kinko's or similar store.
- If you use a lottery to select a small group of participants, remember to email those who were selected so they know to show up.
- Have technology set-up before the guest arrives; you'll be frustrated and embarrassed if you can't find an outlet or set up the right cords and the speaker is watching.
- Know the precise name and title/position of the guest.
- At the beginning of the event, give a short agenda of what's going to happen and when it'll be over. This lets participants know what to expect.
- Tell everyone where the nearest restrooms are.
- Request audience to turn off cell phones and computers

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 The Leadership Institute at Harvard College (LIHC) is a student organization that provides professional leadership training for undergraduates while connecting them with proven leaders in the community and fostering collaboration among fellow leaders on campus. This document was created by Holly Metter in spring 2008 on behalf of LIHC. We hope this has been helpful as you plan your event. For additional helpful resources, please visit our website: <http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~lihc/>.

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