

Guidelines for Hosting a Visiting Speaker in the Division of Biology Seminar Series

Abbreviated version: February 2026

Plan the Visit

Faculty and graduate student hosts are expected to organize activities during the speaker's visit. That said, hosts have great flexibility in planning the schedule. We encourage hosts to organize a schedule with the following components (a sample schedule can be found in the appendix of this document):

- Half-hour to 45-minute slots that allow for personal interactions between the speaker and members of the department. Faculty usually meet one-on-one; postdocs and graduate students may prefer the social comfort of a small group. As schedules allow for virtual visits, we encourage scheduling several faculty meetings that day or the following.
- Monday lunch with graduate students (solicit broad participation by sending a message through the graduate student listserv and individual emails to students you think may be interested in meeting with the speaker).
- Other meals may be organized with or without other members of the department.
- We recommend leaving the half hour before the seminar (3:30 to 4:00) free, so that the speaker can take some time to prepare as needed. For virtual visits, be sure to log on to the Zoom link early to help the speaker set up their screen and to confirm they have a stable internet connection.
- If time permits, speakers may want to visit Konza Prairie, which is a beautiful natural preserve and an important facility in Biology. To visit, contact one of the Konza-affiliated faculty or graduate students. Remember that for KPBS record keeping, all visits should be recorded by a valid permit, even if filed after the fact. KPBS affiliated faculty and graduate students are familiar with the request processing.

To ensure broad participation, we encourage hosts to share a doodle poll with faculty, postdocs, and graduate students in the division. *Ask speakers who they would like to meet with and reach out to those individuals.* Also, if you think some division members might be interested in interacting with the speaker, initiate a potential meeting through a personal message. This approach has proven very effective to ensure broad participation. Finally, when coordinating a speaker's schedule, it is helpful to arrange blocks of appointments that are physically close, especially if faculty are in different buildings. Communicate clearly how you expect transitions between meetings to work to avoid unnecessary delays.

Seminar Logistics

The usual seminar room is Ackert 221. If a large audience is expected, it is also possible to use the larger lecture hall in Ackert 120. Note that the latter room needs to be reserved early through the university room reservation system.

The media facilities in the seminar rooms are flexible, and it is possible to load talks on a USB stick or connect a personal laptop computer (PC or Mac) through HDMI or VGA. If speakers are not using their own computer, we advise them to embed their PowerPoint fonts. If they are using their own computer, we encourage speakers to provide the necessary adapters to connect to VGA or HDMI output. If there are any questions, please make sure to contact Bob LeHew

(rlehew@ksu.edu) well in advance of the seminar. A laser pointer and bottled water are available in the main office for the speakers.

Virtual visits will be scheduled via Zoom.

Entertainment Expenses

Hosts are given an allowance of \$225 total per speaker for entertainment expenses, such as taking the speaker out for dinner with a small group of colleagues or students. This limit includes lunches with graduate students. We encourage hosts to prioritize entertainment expenses for graduate student lunches to provide opportunities to our trainees.

****Graduate student invited speakers only (3-4 per year): you may receive up to \$50 alcohol reimbursement for dinner. Ask for the alcohol on a separate receipt for reimbursement.****

For meal reimbursements, please provide your entertainment receipts to the Biology Business Office (asbiology@ksu.edu). Meal receipts must have an itemized list of expenses and must include a list of names of the people who attended each function. **You may not claim any reimbursement for alcoholic beverages.** Hence, we recommend getting separate itemized receipts for food and alcohol items. If charges for food and alcohol are together on a receipt, the reimbursement processing may be delayed.

Reimbursement

We encourage hosts to make sure speakers understand the reimbursement policies and procedures. You may want to allocate some time to visit with the Biology Business Office (asbiology@ksu.edu or Naaz Yasmin naaz@ksu.edu) in AK 104 to clarify potential questions.

The critical points include the following (these will have been communicated to the speaker prior to the visit already):

- Speakers should provide itemized receipts (ones that show exactly what they consumed) for any meals purchased during their travel or visit. Note that the Division of Biology cannot reimburse alcohol or non-itemized receipts. Receipts can be submitted through the host or directly to the Biology Business Office (asbiology@ksu.edu).
- If the speaker submits an airline ticket or rental car receipt, it must be the copy that shows the last 4 numbers of the credit card charged. The total amount charged to the credit card must also be shown on the receipt. If what is submitted does not show this information, the expense cannot be reimbursed.
- The speaker needs to sign the front of all receipts in non-black ink prior to submission.
- The speaker must provide a completed W-9 form, home address, and social security number to the Biology Business Office (asbiology@ksu.edu).
- All speakers, whether in-person or virtual, receive a \$200 honorarium (unless they are an employee of the State of Kansas).
- Once the speaker has returned home after their visit, and all documents have been received by the accounting office, they will prepare the travel claim on their behalf. Reimbursement typically occurs within a few weeks of filing the claim.