

## Organizing a Kansas Section Meeting

**Date** Picking the date is one of the first things that needs to be done. Facilities at some schools book up early. Things to consider in picking out a date include:

- Facility availability
- Spring break
- Easter
- Regional (even years) or National (odd years) KME meetings ([www.kappamuepsilon.org](http://www.kappamuepsilon.org) for contact information for regional director or national president-elect)
- Conflicts with other meetings; see the calendars maintained by the AMS and NCTM.

It may be possible to have a short-list of possible dates and reserve facilities for more than one date until plans are more finalized.

**Invited Speaker** This is a high priority as soon as the meeting date is set, as good speakers fill up their schedules in advance! Traditionally, there has been an invited speaker who gives an address on Friday evening and another presentation at noon on Saturday. If there is some flexibility in possible meeting dates, a potential speaker could be given a choice. The invited addresses are aimed at a general mathematical audience consisting of mathematics faculty at Kansas colleges and universities as well as mathematics students (undergraduate and graduate). It is a good idea to make sure the speaker knows that there will be students in the audience. Below are some ideas for sources of invited speakers. A few meetings have had separate speakers for Friday evening and Saturday noon.

- Sections are eligible to have a Polya Lecturer speak at a section once every 5 years, with all travel expenses covered by the MAA. In addition, there are the MAA AWM Section Lecturer Program and the MAA NAM Section Lecturer Program, with the Pólya Lecturer that will serve on a three-year rotation, so that all 29 MAA Sections will be eligible for one of the three lectures each year. More information is available at <http://www.maa.org/community/maa-sections/programs-and-services/polya-lectureship>.
- Sections are eligible to have an MAA journal editor speak at a section once every 5 years, with all travel expenses covered by the MAA. More information is available at <http://www.maa.org/community/maa-sections/programs-and-services/editor-lectures-program>.
- Each section is eligible to have a MAA National Officer visit its section meeting and speak, with all travel expenses paid by the MAA. (This is the program under which Francis Su spoke in 2017.) More information can be found at <http://www.maa.org/community/maa-sections/section-visitors-program>.

- The speaker may be someone who is already being invited in for a lecture series or some other event at the host school.
- Ph.D. advisors, co-authors, or other acquaintances may make good invited speakers.
- Other places to look for possible invited speakers are past programs of the Joint Meetings, for example, people who gave invited MAA addresses or won teaching awards.

The section should cover the speaker's travel and lodging (unless it is covered by the MAA; see above) but ideally, it should not be necessary to pay an honorarium as well.

**Reserving Facilities** This will vary from school to school but probably needs to be done as soon as possible. It may be possible to have a short-list of possible dates and reserve facilities for more than one date until plans are more finalized. (If this is done, don't forget to cancel the unnecessary reservations after the date is finalized.) Facilities will be needed for the keynote lectures (typically a large lecture hall), Friday night reception, Saturday lunch, contributed talks, business meeting, MAA book sale, and the KS Collegiate Mathematics Competition (contact a competition coordinator to see what is needed). Something else to consider is scheduling a technology specialist to be on hand.

**Registration Fee** In conjunction with the other officers before registration materials are made out, a decision must be made about the registration fee for the conference. Since the section does not get much income throughout the year, the conference needs to be pretty much self-sustaining. Expenses may include speaker travel/honorarium, lunch, snacks, folders, awards for students, ... For the last several years, the fee has been \$40 for MAA members, \$45 for non-members, \$15 for students or K-12 teachers. The fee for non-MAA faculty is higher since the subvention money we get each year from MAA, which comes from our dues, is used to partially subsidize the conference by giving student awards and other expenses. It may also be a good idea to charge an additional late fee (say \$10 or \$15) for registrations received after a certain date, in order to encourage early registration.

Another decision which will depend on the host institution is how to handle the meeting finances and to whom to have the registration checks made out. Also, lately, registration has been handled online by the host school. Most attendees will need receipts for their registration.

One possibility for the future is to set up a PayPal account to handle registration. Other MAA sections have done this with success and we can contact them to ask for help. If we do this, it may be necessary to link the PayPal account to the section's bank account rather than the host institution (not all departments have their own bank accounts), which would require coordination with the KSMAA Treasurer.

**Registration Form and Spreadsheet** In recent years there has been registration online using Google Forms. At some point, MAA will be supporting registration via the section webpage.

The section secretary needs to make out a report after the meeting and he/she will need some specific information about attendees that should be on the registration form. Contact the secretary beforehand for up-to-date information on what needs to be included. The info needed for recent meetings is listed below in “after the meeting”. You may want to create a spreadsheet to keep track of registrations as they come in and to use to generate a “check-in” list for the registration table at the meeting.

**Meeting Announcements** At some point in advance of the meeting, announcements need to be made to alert members of the section to the upcoming meeting. The Call for Contributed Talks needs to be made far enough in advance to give potential presenters time to consider submitting a talk and so that the deadline gives whomever is making out the schedule time to do that. Also, since professors are notorious for waiting to the last minute or even missing deadlines, there may need to be some flexibility built in to the deadline to allow for an extension. It is a good idea to send out multiple announcements. The best way to get out information is via the KSMAA Community on MAA Connect. Other ways to get the information out are via the KSMAA section liaison coordinator, the KSMAA Newsletter (published early in the fall and spring semesters), and the KSMAA website.

**Website** The meeting should have its own website with the schedule, abstracts of talks, information about travel, lodging and parking, etc. Be sure to contact the KSMAA webmaster to put a link on the section webpage to the meeting webpage.

**Student presentations** In the past, there were student presentation prizes awarded. This involves putting together a judging committee (one for graduate student talks, one for undergraduate student talks), scheduling talks so that the judges can attend all of the talks, scheduling a time for judges to meet and make decisions, and announcement of the top paper prizes. More recently, especially if the number of student presentations is relatively low, the section has been giving a small amount of money (~\$50) to all student presenters (grad & undergrad). The MAA used to award a 1 year membership to presentation winners but has discontinued that practice, although the section has recently been paying for the membership for student presenters. They may at some point begin giving 1 year access to MAA journals online. The treasurer should be consulted about student presentation prizes and the supply of certificates. If necessary, certificates may need to be created.

**KS Mathematics Competition** The Kansas Collegiate Mathematics Competition (KCMC) has been part of the KSMAA conference since 2005. The meeting organizer should communicate with the competition coordinator(s) before putting together the schedule. They typically need rooms for a coaches’ meeting, the competition itself, and graders. Also, registration forms and deadlines for the competition and the conference itself need to be coordinated. All students participating in KCMC are expected to register for the conference.

**Scheduling Considerations** It works well to hold the competition from 8-11am on Saturday morning. Many of the undergraduates attending will be taking part in the KCMC, so it makes sense to schedule activities of less interest to students: e.g., talks about pedagogy, chairs’

meeting, etc on Saturday morning. It may work well to have the second invited talk either before or after lunch. Talks of more interest to undergraduates (including talks by undergraduates!) can go in the afternoon. The final event is an awards ceremony for the KCMC winners; we can also acknowledge student presenters at this time. It may be helpful to look at programs of prior meetings; see the history section of the KSMAA website.

**Folders** May want to have folders for attendees possibly including nametags, schedule, abstracts, maps, pencil/pen, paper or notepad, local information, puzzles, receipts for registration, wifi information, ... For the 2009 meeting, we fixed up a box for registration containing the folders, 15 spare programs, 4 sharpie pens, 30 spare name tags, sign in sheet, spare registration forms, and blank receipts.

**Displays** Something to consider is having an area or room for displays. Upon request, the MAA will provide a selection of books for display at no charge. Attendees cannot purchase books directly (which is good – one less thing for the organizer to worry about!), but can order them from the MAA, with a discount for attending the meeting. The books are the section's to dispose of afterwards; in 2017, we invited each student presenter to choose a book for him/herself. As of April 2017, the contact person at the MAA is Erica Teal ([teal@maa.org](mailto:teal@maa.org)); contact her a few weeks before the meeting.

**Graduate School Fair** We did this first in 2017. Each Kansas school with a graduate program was invited to send a representative(s) to talk with undergraduates about their programs. Contact department chairs or directors of graduate studies at least a month or two before the meeting.

**Officer Dinner** Traditionally, the section officers meet and eat dinner with the invited speaker(s) at a local restaurant before the Friday evening activities begin. Each officer pays for his/her own meal. The organizer needs to find out who is attending and make reservations with the restaurant. Officers and the invited speaker(s) need an invite and directions.

**KAMATYC** The meeting may be joint with KAMATYC (Kansas Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges). Their webpage is at <http://www.ka.matyc.org/>. They prefer having a central location for the meeting since many of their members have to pay for their own travel. Even if the meeting is not joint, it doesn't hurt to advertise the meeting through KAMATYC sources.

**Helpers at the meeting** It may be helpful to have students or other faculty members or KSMAA members assigned roles for during the meeting, such as the following:

- Registration table
- Display tables
- Moderating sessions
- Snacks/Breakfast
- Technology troubleshooting
- Directing traffic to hard-to-find rooms (may want to have signs up)
- Set-up and clean up of rooms
- Taking care of the invited speaker(s)

**Business meeting** The annual KSMAA business meeting takes place during the conference. The section chair is responsible for setting the agenda and chairing the business meeting.

**After the meeting** The section secretary has to file an annual report which includes information from the meeting. He or she will need information including # of attendees/registrants broken down by

- Faculty member at a college or university with highest degree offered by your department:
  - Associate (or equivalent program)
  - Bachelors
  - Masters
  - Doctorate
- Business, industry, government
- High school teacher
- Undergraduate student
- Graduate student

Also, included is the number of MAA members.

**Other Sources of Information**

- Executive Committee (section webpage)
- Past hosts (section webpage)
- *Organizing a Section Meeting: Five Things I Learned* by Qiang Shi, June/July 2014  
MAA Focus  
(<http://digitaleditions.walsworthprintgroup.com/publication/index.php?i=212119&m=&=&p=31&pre=&ver=swf>)

**Feel free to edit this document and to share it with the incoming chair-elect and vice chair-elect.**