

## **PROGRAMS**

### **PURPOSE**

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The primary reason for SPE's existence is to disseminate technical information, and the importance of technical programming in a section cannot be overemphasized. Some SPE sections hold meetings at which technical papers are presented. These meetings are an important forum for communicating new technical ideas and applications. To make the ideas and information shared at your section events available to a wider audience, today and into the future, review Guidelines for Papers Presented at SPE Section Events for Inclusion in the SPE eLibrary.

### **STRUCTURE**

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Sections typically use a committee of three to five members as well as a chairperson to plan their programming activities. The size and structure of the program committee may depend on the section size and number of programs. Smaller sections may have only a program chairperson, while larger sections may have three to five subcommittees of the overall program committee.

### **PROGRAM CHAIRPERSON**

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The program chairperson is responsible for all programs presented at regular section meetings. This responsibility, which may be delegated to others, includes

- Setting objectives for section programming
- Securing and contacting speakers for programs
- Ensuring all physical facilities of the meeting are in order
- Ensuring the meeting is properly announced and publicized

It is recommended that a member serve on the program committee as vice chairperson or chairperson-elect before becoming the program chairperson. The program chairperson should be a member of the section's board of directors and should be present at all board meetings.

### **PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

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The program committee, under the direction of the chair, is responsible for:

- Assisting in development and execution of long- and short-range program plans
- Inviting speakers to participate in a section program
- Arranging transportation for speakers between the airport, hotel, and meeting
- Renting meeting-room facilities and arranging food service
- Obtaining and operating audio/visual equipment
- Writing publicity notices for the membership and the media

## **SETTING OBJECTIVES**

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The first step to creating a successful section program is setting long- and short-range programming objectives and identifying ways to attain them. Before the section year begins, the program committee should have a good idea of the overall goals of the section.

Once the long-range objectives are set, specific plans for the coming year can be developed. Approach this task from a content standpoint, using the most pressing needs of your members and the committee's objective to meet that need to determine how many meetings (and of what type) it will take to satisfy that particular objective.

## **PROGRAM TYPES**

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When developing long- and short-range programming objectives, consideration should be given to the type of meeting format (luncheon, evening meeting, etc.) that will best reach the objective. You may wish to consider having panel discussions or study groups. A study group requires little more than a place to meet and a leader. The leader should be someone thoroughly familiar with the subject and someone willing to work at developing learning objectives and lesson plans.

## **SOURCES FOR PROGRAMS**

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The primary source for programs is the industry itself. Your section members, or the contacts they have, can provide your most informative programs. Determine what technical areas need to be covered through your programs. It is important that speakers be knowledgeable on the subject and have effective and engaging presentation skills.

Other sources for section programs include local colleges, civic clubs, and environmental groups. Representatives from these groups can give your membership a fresh perspective on issues surrounding energy resources production.

The committee should also plan for distinguished lecturers, SPE officer visitations, and study groups.

## **DISTINGUISHED LECTURER PROGRAM**

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Another source for programming is SPE's Distinguished Lecturer Program. As one of the most popular SPE-administered programs, it provides sections with up to three expert speakers during the September to May lecture season.

### ***How SPE Chooses Distinguished Lecturers***

SPE accepts nominations from members for SPE Distinguished Lecturers at [disting\\_lect@spe.org](mailto:disting_lect@spe.org). All nominations must be submitted by 1 February. The distinguished lecturer committee meets in May to review all nominations and select candidates from each discipline. In September and October, each candidate meets with the distinguished lecturer committee to give his/her verbal presentation. After hearing all presentations, the committee selects the final lecturers. The distinguished lecturer committee is appointed by the SPE president-elect. Members represent each SPE region. Review the nomination requirements and retrieve the nomination form at [www.spe.org/dl](http://www.spe.org/dl).

### ***Selecting Distinguished Lecturers for Your Section***

In January, SPE sends the program chairperson a list of lecturer topics and abstracts, as well as biographies for each lecturer. You should distribute this information to all your section officers and ask them to rank their top 10 preferences for the lectures at your section. SPE will select three lecturers out of your top 10 to present at your section during the year. SPE attempts to match lecturer availability with section preferences.

You will receive the final lecture schedule for your section in late April or early May. If for any reason you need to make changes to the schedule, you must immediately contact the SPE Distinguished Lecturer Program manager at [disting\\_lect@spe.org](mailto:disting_lect@spe.org).

## ***Timeline Checklist for Hosting a Distinguished Lecturer***

### **Day -90**

- SPE sends you the lecturer's contact information, presentation abstract, biography, photograph, lecturer confirmation form, and lecturer evaluation form. If a visa is required for the lecturer to enter your country, a copy of the lecturer's passport will also be sent.
- Complete and return the lecturer confirmation form to the SPE Distinguished Lecturer Program coordinator. Your timely response confirms the lecture and allows SPE to finalize the most cost-effective travel arrangements.
- Finalize room and catering arrangements with the location of the event

### **Day -85**

- Contact the lecturer and provide an invitation letter and any other documentation that is required for the lecturer to enter your country. It is critical this is done in a timely manner to avoid cancellation of the lecture.
- Confirm the date, time, and location of the program with the lecturer.
- Ask the lecturer if he/she requires any audio/visual equipment or other supplies.
- Provide the lecturer with the demographics of your section and technical backgrounds of your members and information about whether spouses will attend the program.
- Ask the lecturer if he speaks the language spoken in your country. If not, make arrangements to hire a translator.
- If you plan to translate the lecturer's presentation, ask him/her to send it to you so you can complete the translation in time.
- Please note that SPE will reserve hotel accommodations wherever possible. If needed, SPE may contact you to assist in these arrangements.

### **Day -80**

- SPE sends you a copy of the lecturer's itinerary.
- Contact the lecturer and make arrangements to meet him/her at the airport and provide transportation to the meeting and back to his/her hotel and/or airport.

### **Day -70**

- Develop a plan to publicize the event to members, potential members, and local industry.

### **Day -65**

- Create a publicity flyer and distribute through email, company bulletins, section newsletters, etc.

- Contact the event location and secure the lecturer's requirements for audio/visual equipment.

#### **Day -14**

- Arrange for someone to be present at the event who is familiar with operating the audio/visual equipment.
- Contact the lecturer and offer, but do not insist, to entertain him/her during his/her visit and/or provide a tour of the city or a nearby oil field.
- Decide if your section wishes to give your lecturer a gift as a token of appreciation and purchase the gift.

#### **Day of the event**

- Confirm the arrival of the lecturer and be at the airport to greet him/her.
- Review the lecturer's biography and prepare your introduction with the lecturer.
- Verify that the audio/visual equipment is in working order before the meeting begins.

#### **During the event**

- Introduce the lecturer to the members of your section.
- Provide an opportunity for questions following the lecturer's presentation. You might want to prepare a few questions ahead of time for fellow section officers to ask to get the question and answer session started.
- Distribute the evaluation forms to attendees. The evaluation should be the consensus of all the section attendees (not just the officers or the chairperson) on the content and presentation of the lecture. You may also submit each of the individual forms collected. This will help the lecturer improve his/her presentation and assist the SPE Distinguished Lecturer Program manager in providing the lecture needs of our members.
- If applicable, present the lecturer with an appreciation gift. Offer to mail the gift for him/her if carrying it on the remaining portion of his/her trip would be difficult.

#### **At the conclusion of the event**

- Continue introducing the lecturer to those members he/she may not have already met.
- Collect the evaluation forms.
- Ensure that the lecturer gets back to the hotel and/or to the airport.

#### **Day +1**

- Write a thank you letter and send to the lecturer.
- Send completed evaluations to the SPE Distinguished Lecturer Program manager.

## **SPE OFFICER VISITATION**

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The SPE Officer Visitation Program provides the opportunity for one of the four society officers (president, past president, president-elect, and vice president–finance) to visit SPE sections. The purpose of the visit is twofold: (1) to present a program on a technical subject or on the status of SPE and (2) to provide an opportunity for the SPE officer to hear directly the concerns and needs of section members and officers.

Sections scheduled for an officer visit are contacted early in the section year. Sections who wish to schedule a visit by an SPE officer should contact the executive assistant to the board of directors at [bd\\_liaison@spe.org](mailto:bd_liaison@spe.org). Ideally, sections should request an officer visit at least 6 months in advance.

To request an officer visit, you should

- Work with the board liaison to confirm details of the officer’s visit. This includes date, time, and place of meeting; whether the officer needs transportation to and from the airport; and assistance with hotel reservations.
- Arrange a separate meeting of the section's board of directors where the SPE officer can hear and discuss section needs and concerns.
- In some sections, where deemed appropriate, work with the regional director and board liaison to set up a meeting (breakfast or other) with key managers from area companies to promote SPE and its programs.

## **SECTION STUDY GROUPS**

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This is intended to provide you guidance on forming a study group in your local section. The examples are provided for consideration but are not required. The process described is based on the formation of the Facilities and Construction Study Group for the Delta Section in New Orleans, Louisiana. The primary mission of a study group is to

- Attract, expand, and promote the membership and involvement of local engineering and technical professionals.
- Host regular, local, topical meetings to maintain industry awareness of current issues (related to the study group’s area of expertise) and generate discussion about such issues.
- Enhance the core competencies of local engineering and technical professionals through discussions and the transfer of knowledge at workshops involving industry practitioners.

The below steps outline how you can form a study group.

### ***Obtain Section Support***

The first step in developing an SPE section study group is to contact the other SPE section members to build support. The level of detail required regarding

the nature and purpose of the new SPE study group will depend on the knowledge of those contacted.

When presenting the proposal or recommendation to the section leadership, consider

- The mission of the study group
- Organizing a kick-off meeting—timing, location, and SPE section officer participation
- Costs associated with holding a kick-off meeting. Some sections may offer to pay for the initial costs (e.g., meals, room charges, etc.); you can find a company sponsor, or you can ask attendees to pay for the associated costs.

### ***Hold a Kick-Off Meeting***

At your initial meeting, you should introduce the study group's concept and purpose, briefly review successful practices from other SPE sections, and outline the organizational structure needed to support this effort. The main purpose of the kick-off meeting is to gauge and confirm interest among section members and ultimately determine if the study group has the potential for success. If the response is positive, then potential study group officers and presentation topics should be identified. You should also set tentative dates for a follow-up meeting.

These are tasks involved in coordinating the initial meeting:

- 1) Compile your invitee list. (The section can generally provide a key contact list.)
- 2) Decide when and where to hold the meeting.
- 3) Create an invitation letter that includes the purpose of meeting, date, time, location, directions, who to contact for RSVP, and an explanation of how costs will be handled. A sample of this letter is included in Appendix A.
- 4) Develop the meeting agenda, presentation, and handout material. The following can be used as a guideline for discussion items and handouts:
  - Statutes of the study group, specifying the mission, objectives, and purpose
  - Membership information and methods for recruiting members
  - Officer roles and responsibilities
  - Officer election process
  - Materials from other section study groups

- Operation guidelines
- Events that pertain to the study group
- Discipline related news topics

### ***Confirm New Study Group Officers***

The kick-off meeting organizer and willing local SPE section participants should make the final selection of study group officers. This expedites the process and allows the organization's efforts to move forward. Allow a mix of producers and service companies, large and small companies, etc.

### ***Hold a Follow-Up Meeting***

The follow-up meeting should occur within 2–3 months after the kick-off meeting. The steps for planning this meeting are similar to those for the kick-off meeting. The follow-up meeting may involve

- Introducing the study group officers
- Refining the list of potential presentation topics and planning the first program
- Initiating development of the group's operating guidelines
- Developing action plans for finalizing the operating guidelines and list of presentation topics

## **REFERENCES**

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- Distinguished Lecturer Confirmation Form
- Distinguished Lecturer Evaluation Form
- Distinguished Lecturer Nomination Form
- Guidelines for Papers Presented at SPE Section Events for Inclusion in the SPE eLibrary
- Study Group Position Nomination Form

### **For more information on Distinguished Lectures, contact**

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