

Residential College Symposium Annual Meeting Host Institution Guide

Updated: November 2019

I. Identifying Meeting Dates

- A. The Residential College Symposium annual meeting is generally held during October or November of the fall term. You will need to work with both your own institution and the Residential College Society Executive Team to determine the optimum Thursday-Saturday dates in the fall semester to host the annual meeting. Keep in mind that your institution's athletics schedule (esp. football home games) and larger university functions (e.g., Homecoming) may play a role in determining RCS dates due to university meeting space availability and expected occupancy of local hotel accommodations.

II. Hotel Accommodations

- A. Work with your university conference services or travel office to determine the best rates and accommodations for approximately **175 outside participants** for the symposium, assuming the majority of participants will stay for three nights (Thurs night arrival - Sun morning departure). Many institutions have preferred hotels that they have worked with to negotiate a reduced room rate and/or event block options for any university-related event. Generally you should try to secure a sleeping room cost per night of under **\$185/single-double occupancy**, if possible.
- B. Keep in mind that if the hotel(s) selected is not in walking distance to the meeting site/campus, then you will need to budget for a shuttle or some other form of transportation to get participants to and from the symposium.
- C. Have the hotel reservation deadline be no more than 3-4 weeks before the conference.
- D. Check with the hotel to determine whether they will be flexible enough to increase the room block by reasonable increments, if the block fills up quickly.

II. Meeting Space

- A. Budget for Meeting Space: All meeting space should be held on campus (not at a hotel or other venue)

Each school operates differently in terms of how it allocates and charges for space. Some schools have a conference center that operates as a source of revenue for the school. If this is your situation, the costs may be quite high. Other schools supposedly charge for meeting space, but it is a paper-charge, not an actual cash-exchange. Sometimes schools manage to book us during fall break when classrooms are readily available, so there is little charge for the meeting rooms. It is important that you know how your institution works when you attempt to create a budget for this event.
- B. General Space Needs
 1. Plenary and General Reception Space
 - one large plenary space and one large reception space for Thursday evening (food service and bar)

- For Friday morning one plenary space that can accommodate 200 people and for the presenter, a platform or stage, podium, screen, and microphone along w/ a platform or stage
 - For Saturday afternoon over lunch: one general session/plenary space that can accommodate 200 people banquet/round table style with food tables and for the presenter, a platform or stage, podium, screen, and microphone along w/ a platform or stage
 - For Friday late afternoon: one general session/plenary space that can accommodate 200 people theater style and has a platform/stage, podium, screen, and mic for the presenter
2. Meeting Room Space
 - Three meeting rooms for concurrent sessions available all day from Thursday morning through Saturday afternoon. These rooms should be equipped w/ A/V and each should hold approximately 60 people, theater style. It is important that these rooms be close together. It is not advisable to have meeting rooms located in several different buildings on campus or far away from the main hotel.
 3. Planning and Executive Team Meeting Space
 - A conference room/board room for the use of the RCS planning team, executive team, and on-site host members should be reserved throughout the entirety of the symposium
 4. Registration
 - A space for registration should be reserved from Thursday morning through Saturday morning with two long tables, appropriate linens, and chairs for registration desk volunteers. The registration area should be set up in a space that all participants must pass through in order to get to any of the sessions/meeting rooms for the symposium.
 5. Coffee Service Space
 - Space on Friday and Saturday for a coffee service from 7:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.
 6. Potential Exhibit Space (for showcasing poster sessions and/or corporate or academic sponsors)
 - If the Symposium planning team decides to host poster sessions or exhibit sponsors' work, the host institution should secure a space of approximately 1,500 sq ft.
 7. Hospitality Suite
 - A secure space monitored by student staff where conference participants can get refreshments, snacks, etc.
 8. Luggage storage
 - A secure room where participants can store their luggage on the final day of the symposium since many attendees will be leaving to return home directly at the end of the symposium on Saturday.
 9. Inclusive spaces

- Host institution should ensure that meeting space is ADA compliant. Consider lactation space, meditation or prayer space, gender inclusive bathrooms, and accessibility maps.

10. On-site Payment of Registration

- Depending on how the host institution accepts any on-site registration fees, you may need to ensure that you can have a phone line or whatever wiring (if any) may be necessary to accept credit card payments. You should be able to check with your institution's accounting office to clarify this.

III. Refreshments (all refreshments are paid for by the local host using registration money and/or any additional funding from institutional or outside sponsors)

A. Thursday Reception

1. The arrangements for the reception are up to the local host but should include light refreshments and a selection of beverages. The types of food and drinks served are as flexible as your budget. Depending on your budget, you may offer drink tickets to attendees or serve them on a personal pay basis. **The local host is responsible for making the catering and drink arrangements with the university within the local host's budget.**

B. Friday Socials

1. Professional Faculty/Staff Social: This social is a cash bar occasion. Some light snacks should be provided. A space should be provided for up to 200 people.
2. Undergraduate Student Social: Should be led by students with an activity to build community with light snacks provided. A space should be provided for up to 30-40 students.

C. Coffee Breaks, Etc.

1. Typically coffee and hot tea (and cold water, if appropriate) is made available twice a day, starting on Friday morning. You can schedule coffee to be available in the morning, and then refreshed once later in the morning and then again in the afternoon. If you want these breaks to be more lavish, that is your choice based upon your budget.
2. Close proximity to a food court or other campus eating establishment is helpful. If you are depending upon this for conference participants, check to see whether it is open during the whole conference (we've often found student centers to close down on Saturday, leaving conference attendees with few options for food / beverage purchases).
3. Depending on the hotel, the sales office may suggest that the hotel restaurant have a buffet breakfast or a buffet lunch available. As long as there is no cost to you, this is a good idea.

IV. Other Costs

A. Plenary Honoraria, Registration, Travel, and Lodging

1. The total cost for four plenary speakers is \$4,000 (may not be distributed evenly depending on the type of speaker and their association w/ the RCS Exec Team. Please consult w/ Exec Team to determine appropriate honoraria for each speaker). This cost is the responsibility of the local host. In addition to the honoraria, the local host is also responsible for covering the cost of speakers' conference registration, travel, and lodging.

B. Audio Visual Costs

1. It is very hard to predict what the costs for audio visual equipment will be in any given year. It depends upon the sophistication of the presentations and the arrangements made at the school. More and more schools are using outside vendors for this material, and the costs can be prohibitive. Local hosts should investigate carefully what the arrangements are in their locale for everything from microphones and podiums, to slide projectors, to other presentation equipment. Be aware that most presenters will employ AV in their presentations. This means that not only are you looking for the most economical way to provide these services but also working on the logistics of providing the equipment to the presenters throughout the conference.

D. Miscellaneous Costs for the Local Host(s)

1. Hospitality Packet: The local hosts usually prepare a hospitality packet/folder that includes information about the host school(s), information on eating options, university maps, and so on.
2. Printing costs: There are miscellaneous printing and photocopying charges for agendas, announcements, etc.

V. Person Power

A. Generally you need to gather enough person power to fulfill the following responsibilities:

1. **Primary Local Coordinator:** This is the main faculty or staff contact for the event who is typically a member of the RC Society Executive team. This person is on duty for the whole event.
2. **Registration Coordinator:** Generally a faculty or staff person or extremely competent graduate student. This person is on duty for the whole event and shares responsibility with the RCS graduate student for running the registration desk. The RCS Secretary will also supervise the registration area, but it will really be in the hands of the local registration coordinator and the RCS graduate assistant.
3. **Audio Visual Coordinator:** It is best to have one person be in charge of AV requests and trouble-shooting / problem solving during the conference. Can

be a graduate student, but must be relatively savvy with electronic equipment and be available throughout the whole event.

4. **Marketing manager:** Have someone that is responsible for promoting the Symposium through social media and email communication. Can develop directional signs for attendees when walking around host site, restroom signs, etc.
5. **Transportation coordinator:** Responsible for shuttle coordination, hospitality, parking passes, and cab coordination if needed for airport runs on the final day of the symposium.
6. **Students or volunteers** to work the registration area. A core group of dependable graduate or undergraduate students need to be available to work the RCS registration desk during the conference. It is usually a better idea to have at least 10 students who work more than once during the conference, rather than having new people continually needing to be trained throughout the conference.

VI. Sources of Income

- A. Registration Fees: Consult with the RCS Exec Team to determine the appropriate cost of registration for each type of participant (e.g., faculty/staff, student, etc.)
- B. Meal or snack sponsorship from institution food services department. Ex:
 1. Sodexo
 2. Aramark
- C. Divisions of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs/Provost's Office
- D. Promotional Material sponsorship for a complimentary swag item
- E. Architecture firms that may want to get their name on something for swag item- Ex:
 1. VMDO Architects
 2. Hanbury Architects
 3. Clark-Dixon Architects
 4. KSQ Architects
- F. Furniture providers - Ex:
 1. Southwest contract
 2. CORT
 3. The Brill Company
- G. Try to cultivate cosponsors from other institutions in the area. Consider asking them to cosponsor the event as a whole, a particular plenary, or some other part of the conference. In exchange, they can be mentioned on the program, have information about their school included in the hospitality packet, etc. Remember, every little bit

(even \$500) will add up and help. As the cost for hosting RCS continues to increase, many schools are working together with other schools in the area to co-host the event. If this option is appealing, talk to the RCS exec team to determine whether it could work.

- H. Consider cosponsors within your own institution too. Are there other departments, institutes, programs, foundations or law schools that might be tapped for funds?

VII. Institutional Commitment

A member of the senior leadership team at your institution needs to provide written confirmation of the institutional commitment to hosting this conference along with the necessary financial and human resources as outlined above.

VIII. Closing Thoughts

It is hard to predict exactly how much any particular meeting may cost, since so much depends upon the particular situations at a site. Generally, the local institution will need to raise \$6,000-\$10,000 over the registration income. In addition, there are possible costs for rental transportation vans (if arrangements require) and other incidental costs (packet preparation, phone, meals for student helpers, etc.) If necessary, the RCS Exec Team can work together with you to help secure additional sources of income.