

Some Suggestions for a Successful Meeting.

The major objective of the meeting is to bring students from different schools together and let them see how many students share their interests in mathematics. Hopefully, we will develop contacts with other students and schools that will be mutually rewarding in the future. We could, for example, arrange travel to meetings and split costs, have joint PME meetings with other schools, or make good contacts for graduate schools and employment positions. Individually, who knows what might come of contact with others of like interest.

There are a couple of things I would like you to keep in mind.

First, that the majority of schools that will be participating are much smaller than YSU, and, in consequence, are likely to have far fewer students majoring in mathematics. You will likely have numerous friends at the meeting, students from other schools might feel uncomfortable not knowing many others. Although they may not show it, these students will want to talk with you and others at the meeting, and it is up to us, as hosts of the meeting, to encourage the communication with students from other schools. Talk to as many students from other schools as possible, we will all benefit from the interaction.

Second, at YSU we are very active with regard to student presentations. We have a required senior project that must be presented orally, and are traditional leaders in the number and quality of our student presentations both regionally and nationally. Most schools do not presently have this senior project requirement. As a consequence of this, and the fact that we are hosting this meeting, we will be dominating the presentations. Remember, however, that this is not a competition. We must all be very careful to involve all the participants in all the activities. Success of the meeting will be measured not by how many YSU speakers we have this year or next year, but by the increase in participation of other schools in years to come. We have a very good chance of making undergraduate mathematics at YSU even more nationally prominent if this conference is as successful as I expect it to be.

Third, there are areas in mathematics where we are not strong at YSU. We have an MAA Student Chapter, but it is not at all active. There is an examination in undergraduate

mathematics that is held each year called the Putnam Examination. Sporadically we have had students take this examination, but we have only recently had regular training sessions for the Putnam. Many schools that will be coming to the meeting will have teams in this competition. We do not have a formal intern program for our mathematics majors. We do not have many students submitting written results of their work to national publications. I mention these items to make you aware that there are many things you can learn from the other students coming to the meeting. Find out where students from their schools are going after they graduate, and if they are given better advice than you have been given. Ask them what they like about their programs, and think about how we can improve ours. Let me, Dr. Spalsbury, or Dr. Ritchey have your suggestions after the meeting.

Finally, we have invited a number of local high school teachers and their top junior and senior students to attend the conference in the hope of introducing them to the exciting possibilities of majoring in mathematics in general, and at YSU in particular. This is a wonderful opportunity to “show off” our program. Let’s make the most of it! If you know any of these people, please give them some attention, and tell them how pleased you are with your educational decision (on the other hand, if you aren’t happy, just keep quiet!).

Try to look a little critically at this Conference and see if you can make suggestions for improvements in the future. Three years ago in this notice I said that I hope to run this conference on an annual basis, and have a much more ambitious long term goal. It was to “clone” the YSU conference nationally. We have done very well so far, but we must always look to improve. By creating an exceptional model for undergraduate conferences at YSU we can make a significant impact on the study of undergraduate mathematics in this country.

I think we will have a good idea of how successful the meeting was by observing the communication during lunch. If the students from other schools and the high schools are talking primarily to each other, or worse, to the faculty that came with them, we have not done a very good job. Get out and mingle!

Instructions for Session Moderators.

1. Check carefully to see that your room is ready. Double check the work of the Room Monitors well before your session begins.
2. Talk to each person you are to introduce before the session begins.
3. Find out at least the following information about each person you will be introducing:
The correct pronunciation of the person's name and school. The person's major, class rank, other majors, academic interests, and future plans. Find out any other interesting items about the person, their hobbies, etc. You should have enough information so that you know all your people well enough to feel comfortable speaking about each of them for a minute.
4. Practice your introductions, but do not read the information when giving the introductions. Try to give a one minute introduction on each person.
5. Each speaker is scheduled for a 15 minute talk after which there is a 5 minute break.

A typical talk might run as follows:

Minute 0-1: Introduction by the Session Moderator.

Minutes 1-5: Background on the talk.

Minutes 5-11: What the speaker did.

Minutes 11-13: Conclusions.

Minutes 13-15: Questions for the speaker.

Minutes 15-16: Thanking of the speaker, followed by applause, followed by the announcement of time for the next talk.

Now, you and I both know that it will likely not go as outline. But it is the responsibility of the Session Moderator to keep the sessions running efficiently. Each speaker must begin and end at the proper time since we are running parallel session and people will want to move from one to another. To ensure this you must be sure to:

Start each session at the correct time.

Make sure the speaker does not exceed the allotted time. It should be explained to each speaker that you will give a signal at the end of 13 minutes that there are 2 minutes of scheduled time left, and that at the end of 15 minutes you will

stand. Also, at the end of 17 minutes, you will be forced to interrupt (use my name and ferocious reputation if necessary) to announce that the speaker will be happy to continue any discussion in the hall, but that we must move on to the next talk. (This applies particularly to questions after the talk.)

After each speaker has finished you should do one of two things. If the 15 minute time limit for the talk has not expired, you may ask if anyone in the audience has a question of the speaker, or you may ask one yourself. If the time limit has expired, you should mention that the speaker would be happy to take questions in the hall after the session. In either case you should thank the speaker, lead the applause, and announce the amount of time before the next session.

The instructions above read more formidable than they are. Remember, you have been chosen to do this task because you have good judgment. Use it to ensure that the sessions run on time and that the speakers all feel as comfortable as possible.

6. Try not to get involved with the other details of the meeting, at least until after your session is concluded. Instead, try to socialize with the people from outside YSU, particularly those who you are introducing. This is your primary responsibility.
7. Have fun. We greatly appreciate your willingness to help.

Instructions for Room Monitors.

The following items need to be check in your assigned room:

1. The projector is present and operable.
2. The projector screen is present and operable.
3. The room is clean and attractive.
4. The bulletin board has no extraneous material.
5. There are no broken chairs and equipment in the room. If there are get rid of them somewhere.
6. The chairs are aligned correctly.
7. There is a podium and table, and that both are convenient for speakers to use.

Room Monitors

Room 1062: Matthew Deitwert
Room 1105: Joe Ponzio
Room 1106: Doug Cameron
Room 1111: Tom Cochran
Morning Lounge Area: Josh Hiznay
Afternoon Lounge Area: Ryan Siskind
General Gopher: Brett Hedspeth