

# TEXITE MODERATOR GUIDELINES

(Updated April 18, 2017)

The moderators at TexITE meetings have a major influence on the overall success of the sessions. Being a moderator is more than “just introducing” the speakers. A well-moderated session can be memorable and a great learning opportunity for everyone. On the other hand, a poorly-moderated session can frustrate speakers and attendees and have the potential to throw off the meeting schedule. The following information is designed to help you manage the sessions and describe your responsibilities as a moderator.

## Before the Meeting

- Maintain communication with the TexITE person responsible for organizing your session.
- Confirm speakers and topics. NOTE: This may be done by the TexITE person responsible for organizing the session or the TexITE Vice President.
- TexITE VP to contact speakers a minimum of 4 weeks in advance of the session to ensure they have received information regarding the session and their presentation, particularly with regard to the amount of time they have for their presentation and Q&A period (see below).
- For 90-minute sessions with 4 speakers:
  - 20 minutes for speaker’s presentation and Q&A session. Leaves 5 minutes for housekeeping and 5 minutes at the end to open up Q&A for all speakers.
- For 90-minute sessions with 3 speakers (should be avoided as the preference is to have 4 speakers):
  - 25 minutes for speaker’s presentation and Q&A session. Leaves 5 minutes for housekeeping and 10 minutes at the end to open up Q&A for all speakers.
- For 2-hour sessions with 5 speakers:
  - 20 minutes for speaker’s presentation and Q&A session. Leaves 5 minutes for housekeeping and 15 minutes at the end to open up Q&A for all speakers.
- Provide each speaker with Release Form and explain the need for forms to be completed prior to the meeting, and no later than once presentation is completed. It is a TexITE goal to have all presentations posted on the website within 1 week after the meeting. Provide them with the Release Form.
- Coordinate with the speakers regarding placing all presentations on one laptop. Having all presentations on one laptop permits a smoother session. In addition, you will need to collect a PowerPoint or PDF of all presentations so that they can be posted on the TexITE website.
- Know your speakers. Be familiar with each speaker’s bio. Be able to articulate their name, title, and at most a brief statement about them. Do not go into a lengthy introduction in order to maximize their presentation time.
- Prepare opening comments for the session (2 minutes max).

## During the Session

- If the host LAC is not providing a computer, bring a laptop which will be connected to the projector. Place all presentations on the laptop prior to the session.
- Pre-open all of the PowerPoint files before the session starts. Be familiar with which presentation goes which each presenter. Pressing Alt-Tab cycles through each open window. Pressing the F5 key starts a presentation from the beginning.

- Arrive early and review the room setup and audio-visual equipment. Meet with the speakers to remind them of the presentation order, time limits, plans to handle Q&A, and how you will provide them with a two-minute warning.
- Deliver opening comments and explain how Q&A will be handled. It is preferable for a standard podium session to take a few questions after each speaker. Leaving all questions to the end oftentimes focuses too much on the last speaker. This requires the moderator to carefully keep speakers on time throughout the session.
- Introduce each speaker.
- Monitor each speaker's time. Coordinate with the speakers before the session regarding your method for indicating they have two-minutes to wrap-up their presentation.
- Occasionally a speaker will not get the hint that their time is up. At this point you may need to stand up to emphasize the point. Hopefully you won't need to actually cut them off, but a moderator must be willing and able to do this as a last resort.
- Listen to the presentation and be prepared to ask at least one question during the Q&A in case no one in the audience has a question.
- Thank each speaker after their presentation.
- Deliver closing remarks and thank each speaker again and start the applause if no one else has.
- Collect the release forms from the speaker if not already provided.

## Housekeeping Tips

As the moderator, we ask that you make several housekeeping announcements at the beginning of your session.

- Encourage attendees to fill in the empty seats.
- Remind attendees to turn off cell phones and electronic devices.
- During the session you may make opening and closing remarks as a moderator, but remember your primary focus is to highlight the speakers and their topics. Your comments should add to the overall quality and theme of the session.

## Helpful Hints

- Be prepared – Know the session topic!
- Be ready to multitask – Moderators must handle multiple items simultaneously. Typically those tasks are listening to the current presentation/discussion, keeping track of time, and generating comments that may add to the overall quality of the session.
- Be clear – Ask short questions and make clear statements.
- Be timely – **Get the session started on time and end on time.** This is essential for a smooth running meeting. Keeping the session on time and running smoothly is the most important task for the moderator.
- Be fair – Keep each speaker within their allotted time out of respect for the other speakers. It is not fair to the last speaker if the moderator fails to keep the prior speakers within their time limit.
- Be firm – Do not allow the audience to take over the session. Also, if the Q&A becomes a two-way dialogue between the speaker and an audience member, step in (with humor if necessary) and note that the conversation can continue after the session. The audience can become bored with a two-way conversation.
- Have fun and learn something.