

ACM UMBC Distinguished Speaker Talk Playbook

This document standardizes and documents the complete organizational workflow for ACM Distinguished Speaker Talks, serving as an internal reference and institutional memory for the ACM UMBC Chapter organizing team.

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1. Early Planning & Speaker Application

Apply for an ACM Distinguished Speaker

- Submit applications through the official **ACM Distinguished Speaker Program website**
- **Recommended frequency:** once per month
- **Semester goal:** 3–4 talks per semester

Initial Speaker Outreach & Interest Confirmation

Confirm whether the Speaker is willing to visit UMBC and collect:

- Talk title
 - Abstract
 - Speaker bio
 - Photo (if available)
 - Preliminary availability window
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2. Funding Application (CSEE Department)

Request Funding from the CSEE Chair

- Typically submitted to **Prof. Younis**
- Use previously successful email templates

Include:

- Overview of the semester's ACM Distinguished Speaker plan
- Expected number of talks
- Budget per talk and total semester budget

After Chair Approval

- The Chair typically CCs the department finance staff
- Funding is considered secured once approved

 *Funding requests may proceed in parallel with later steps; full approval does not need to be awaited before continuing.*

3. Promotional Materials (Flyer & Content)

Create the Event Flyer

- Use existing ACM PPT/Flyer templates
- Replace content with Speaker-specific information

The flyer should include:

- Speaker name & photo

- Talk title
 - Brief abstract
 - Short speaker bio
 - Time & location
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4. Room Reservation

Reserve the Venue

- Coordinate with the CSEE administrative staff
(typically Rosie, Rebecca, or Keara)
- Proceed once the Speaker's date is finalized

Commonly used rooms:

- **ITE 325B** (most frequently used)
 - **ITE 346** (conference room)
 - ITE first floor or other suitable classrooms
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5. Email Announcements (Email Lists)

Prepare the Event Invitation Email

- Content based on flyer information
- Clear and concise for mass distribution
- Abstract and bio may be slightly longer than flyer versions

Distribution

- Send the invite email to CSEE administrative staff

(Rosie / Rebecca / Keara)

- Request forwarding to:
 - All CSEE students
 - All CSEE faculty

Cross-Department Promotion

With CSEE forwarding as endorsement:

- Contact the IS department (e.g., Tiffany) for IS-wide forwarding
 - Contact the Engineering department for Engineering-wide forwarding
 - Success rate is generally high
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6. Speaker Support (Parking & Faculty Welcome)

Parking Guest Code

- Required for external Speakers to park without charge
- Allows free parking in Visitor Parking Lots

Current Process (ACM UMBC example):

- Since the ACM Advisor is in IS (Prof. Song), Prof. Song contacts the IS department
- IS assists with Parking Guest Code application (forms required)
- Reference previous successful email templates

Faculty / Leadership Welcome

Once time, location, and funding are confirmed, invite:

- Prof. Younis
- Prof. Song
- Prof. Finin

If full attendance is not possible, request brief participation (3–5 minutes):

- At the beginning (welcome remarks), or
- At the end (closing remarks)

Purpose:

- Represent the department, college, and ACM
 - Enhance event prestige and external perception
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7. Offline Promotion (Poster Posting)

Print and Post Flyers

Cover major high-traffic buildings:

- ITE Building
- Engineering Building (adjacent to ITE)
- Sherman Hall
- Sondheim Hall
- University Center (UC)
- Library

- Commons
- Math & Psychology Building
- Biological Sciences Building
- Interdisciplinary Life Sciences Building

Goal: Reach audiences beyond email lists

8. Online Promotion (Social Media & Website)

Update ACM platforms using the finalized flyer:

- ACM website
 - Facebook
 - Twitter / X
 - LinkedIn
 - Discord (optional, currently less used)
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9. One Day Before and Event-Day Preparation

One Day Before

- Call the food provider, place the order, if necessary
- Clean coffee machine
- Check:
 - Power supply
 - Projector

- Microphone
 - Plates, forks, spoons, knives, chopsticks
 - Napkins, cups
 - Coffee grounds & sweetener packets
- Purchase:
 - Half & Half or milk
 - Bottled water

Catering Options

- **Option 1:** Costco snacks & drinks
 - **Option 2:** Pre-ordered catering (if budget allows, reduces workload)
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10. Timeline (Execution Schedule)

This timeline is structured at **two levels**: semester-level planning and single-event execution.

Goal: lock all major decisions before the semester starts and enter a “low-stress execution period” one week before each event.



Semester-Level Planning

Timing:

- Fall semester: August (mid–late August)
- Spring semester: January (early January)

Objectives:

- Plan and lock all Distinguished Speaker Talks for the semester (typically 3–4)
- Submit Distinguished Speaker applications on ACM website
- Contact Speakers to confirm:
 - Willingness to participate
 - General availability window
- Request semester-wide funding from CSEE Chair (Prof. Younis)
- Define per-talk and total semester budget
- Chair CCs finance staff upon approval

📌 *After semester-level planning, both funding and Speaker framework should be largely fixed.*

T-6 ~ T-5 Weeks (Event Kickoff)

- Finalize exact date with Speaker
 - Collect and confirm:
 - Talk title
 - Abstract
 - Short & long bios
 - Speaker photo
 - Begin flyer design (parallelizable)
 - Discuss catering plan (Costco vs. restaurant)
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T-4 Weeks (Critical Lock-In Deadline)

- Reserve room via CSEE admin (Rosie or Rebecca)
 - Typically ITE 325B
- Finalize and post flyer
- Send invite email via CSEE email list
- Request cross-department forwarding (IS, Engineering)
- Initiate Parking Guest Code request via ACM Advisor (Prof. Song)
- Formally invite faculty leadership for welcome remarks

 *Do not go later than T-4 weeks:*

- Popular rooms may be unavailable
- Promotion effectiveness drops significantly

T-2 Weeks (Confirmation Phase)

- Reconfirm with Speaker:
 - Time & location
 - Parking Guest Code usage
 - Finalize catering:
 - Restaurant orders completed
 - Or purchasing list & responsible person assigned
 - Confirm faculty welcome participants and timing
 - Begin poster posting
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T-1 Week (Execution Freeze)

- Complete all flyer posting across campus
 - Update ACM website and all social platforms
 - Finalize event flow and host responsibilities
 - No new tasks should be introduced within the final week
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Day 0 (Event Day)

8:00–9:00 AM

- Purchase food if needed
 - Arrive 20–30 minutes early for setup
 - Prepare coffee, refreshments, and lunch
 - Welcome Speaker, assist with parking & equipment
 - Faculty leadership welcome (3–5 minutes, if applicable)
 - Host introduces Speaker and begins talk
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Post-Event Wrap-Up

- Send thank-you email to Speaker
- Collect and upload:
 - Event photos
 - Recording (if available)
 - Slides (with Speaker permission)

- Update ACM website and social media
- Archive all materials for future events and Playbook reuse