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**Guest Speaker Policy & Protocol for institutionally and SGA recognized Clubs & Organizations**

**BRIEF OVERVIEW**

From time to time, SGA-funded clubs and organizations may deem it appropriate to invite off-campus guest speakers to participate in an event or program toward achieving stated outcomes. Student leaders should process this decision with their respective advisor early on in the planning to avoid any problems or complications. Any outside speaker must be approved by the Office of Student Engagement and (on occasion) other administrators. Advisors must also ensure that student leaders get the guest speaker to sign the Messiah University Agreement for Guest Speakers/Performers or Artist Management (see Attachment A). Advisors must attend their club events when guest speakers are involved.

**PROCESS**

All Messiah University clubs and organizations must follow the process outlined below for approval to bring a guest speaker to campus. The [Guest Speaker Request Form](https://www.messiah.edu/clubeventsform) must be submitted no less than one month prior to the program/event date.

If a club or organization is planning to bring an off-campus individual as a guest speaker, the Guest Speaker Request Form must be the first step in the process. Student leaders should not move forward in inviting, planning or promoting the program/event until confirmation is received that the guest speaker is approved by the Office of Student Engagement. **In order to process requests, the club or organization advisor must research the proposed guest speaker thoroughly. The Office of Student Engagement will then process the request for approval, taking into account the research information provided.**

Prior to submitting the Guest Speaker Request Form, it is important that the individual club or organization and advisor does research on the proposed guest. Student leaders and advisors should ask the following questions toward vetting guests:

1. What is the purpose of this program/event?
2. Is the participation of the proposed guest helpful toward achieving stated goals?
3. What value will this proposed guest speaker add?
4. What do we hope students learn as a result of bringing this person/perspective to campus?
5. What educational merit does this program/event have?
6. What qualifications does the proposed guest have in addressing topic of the program or event?
7. Does the known character of the proposed guest align with Messiah’s mission and values?
8. Will the proposed guest be respectful of the institution’s perspective?
9. Are there other concerns with the content or known character of this proposed guest?

NOTE: In order to promote an environment of civility and avoid divisiveness on campus, Messiah University does not approve student organizations to invite political candidates, or their political party or campaign designees, to speak on campus, in person. This protocol helps the University to uphold a practice of remaining neutral in the political arena—at the local, state and national levels. The University does not choose, endorse, fund or promote specific political parties or candidates, or host partisan political events—either directly or through third parties. Messiah advocates that all of its community members should be active, engaged citizens and to support political candidates of their choice, and students are encouraged to participate in the broad range of off-campus events and opportunities available for this purpose in our surrounding region.

Once the online Guest Speaker Request Form is submitted, the Office of Student Engagement will contact the advisor to confirm that they have researched, vetted, and thoughtfully evaluated the proposed guest speaker.

After the proposed guest speaker has been officially approved by the Office of Student Engagement, the individual club or organization will receive an email with the Messiah University Agreement for Guest Speakers/Performers or Artist Management. This must be sent to the guest speaker. It must then be signed and sent back to the Office of Student Engagement prior to the guest being offered a formal invitation to come to campus to participate in the program/event.

If there are questions at any point in this process, please contact Curtis Kurtz, Director of Student Engagement, via email ([ckurtz@messiah.edu](mailto:ckurtz@messiah.edu)).

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**Attachment A**

**Agreement for Guest Speakers/Performers or Artist Management**

Messiah University desires to make on-campus programs and events as beneficial as possible for both guest speakers/performers and our campus community. As such, performers/guest speakers or artist management are asked to read and sign the following agreement as part of accepting our invitation to speak/perform on campus (or virtually).

**Messiah University Identity and Mission Statement**

Messiah University is a Christian university of the liberal and applied arts and sciences. The University is committed to an embracing evangelical spirit rooted in the Anabaptist, Pietist and Wesleyan traditions of the Christian Church. Our mission is to educate men and women toward maturity of intellect, character and Christian faith in preparation for lives of service, leadership and reconciliation in church and society.

**Cultural Engagement & Artistic Diversity**

Messiah University is committed to the concept of liberal learning. We welcome exposure to a variety of intellectual perspectives and artistic expressions, and believe that all perspectives and expressions should be critically engaged by our students. At our institution in particular, this means that we approach such critical engagement from a perspective of Christian faith. We are inviting you to our campus because we believe you can help foster intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and/or artistic growth in our students. In outlining these expectations, our goal is to provide the optimal setting where your ideas, music, art, philosophy, and/or worldview may be shared and communicated most effectively to our audience. We are open to discussing all of the above with you to ensure that our experience together is positive. If for some reason you do not feel comfortable agreeing to abide by the guidelines and expectations described below, then we hope you communicate your particular concerns to us so we can work to address them accordingly.

**Guidelines & Expectations**

While Messiah University does not expect—or even desire—to invite only artists, speakers or performers who adhere to the Christian faith or its traditions, we do ask that you, as our guest, be respectful and understanding of the context of our community. Therefore, we ask that you agree to maintain respectful and courteous commentary about Messiah University and that if you take issue with its values, traditions, or policies, that you take these up with university officials before signing this agreement (as opposed to airing disagreements, grievances, etcetera on campus or via other outlets). We recommend that you familiarize yourself with the university via our website at [www.messiah.edu](http://www.messiah.edu) prior to accepting our invitation to come to campus. Because we have invited you to appear or perform here, we hope you will recognize this as a reasonable request made in the spirit of civility and hospitality. What follows is a simple and common-sense list of expectations that we ask you to observe while on campus. Messiah University reserves the right to cancel or refuse payment (if any) should the guest speakers/performers, their management and/or associated guests violate or disregard any of our expectations, as this shall be deemed a material breach of contract without liability of any kind to Messiah University.

***Agreement for Guest Speakers/Performers or Artist Management continued***

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**For all guests:**

1. Except for an incidental profane word that may occur in a lyric or other, guest speakers/performers are asked not to use obscene or profane language, gestures or images while performing/speaking. Guest speakers/performers should refrain from language that is derogatory or discriminatory based on race, religion, gender, disability status, sexual orientation, age, economic status, ethnicity, national origin, or against Messiah University and its community.
2. Messiah is a “dry” campus, and does not provide alcohol, nor is alcohol permitted to be consumed on the premises.
3. Guest speakers/performers and/or artist management and/or associated guests should communicate with Messiah University on a regular basis before arrival, ensuring appearance and hospitality arrangements are as up to date as possible.
4. All outside organizations (i.e. charities, non-profits or causes) that are being promoted by guest speakers/performers must be approved by Messiah University. Guest speakers/performers should give at least 10 business days of advance notice for approval.

**For guest speakers/performers under contract:**

1. In the event that any conflict, inconsistency or incongruity between the provisions of the guest speaker/performer contract and/or rider and the provisions of this agreement, the provisions of this agreement shall in all respects govern and control. Messiah University, as purchaser, has final control over all matters pertaining to any performance held under its sponsorship, whether on or off campus.
2. In the event of guest speaker/performer sickness or physical ailment, or if a performance or appearance is prevented, rendered impossible or infeasible, by the act of or regulation of any public authority or bureau, civil tumult, strike, epidemic, interruption or in delay of transportation services, war conditions or emergencies, acts of God, or any cause beyond the control of the guest speaker/performer or Messiah University, both parties are released from further obligation under this contract. In the event of such a non-performance for any of the reasons stated in this paragraph, the monies (if any) advanced to the performer/guest speaker hereunder shall be returned to Messiah University in full within 10 days from the date that non-performance or appearance becomes apparent.
3. For performers, the artist shall be solely liable for any and all losses, liabilities, claims, damages and expenses (including reasonable costs of investigation and attorneys’ fees) (collectively, the “Losses”) occurring at the concert and caused to Messiah University by (i) the performer’s failure to comply with any and all federal, state, foreign, local, and municipal regulations, ordinances, statutes, rules, laws, constitutional provisions, and common laws applicable to the performer’s performance, (ii) any unlawful acts on the part of the performer, (iii) the negligent acts, errors and/or omissions or the willful misconduct of the performer, or (iv) the material breach or default by the performer, an associated group member, or their officers, directors, agents, or employees of any provision of this agreement.

**Guest Speaker/Performer Name:**

**Date of Engagement/Performance:**

*Signature below indicates that the above-named guest speaker/performer has read and understands all of the guidelines and expectations outlined in this agreement. If guest speaker/performer, their management and/or guests do not meet these stated guidelines and expectations, Messiah University will consider this a cancellation of any existing and legally-binding contract.*

**Guest Speaker/Performer or Artist Management Signature:**

**Today’s Date:**

**Please return this signed agreement to Messiah University via email:** [**studentengagement@messiah.edu**](mailto:studentengagement@messiah.edu)