



Delmarva Discussions

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PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Delmarva Discussions book discussion series' follow the successful format developed by the American Library Association. Each series includes titles chosen by scholars to represent a particular theme in the humanities. Participants will check out series books (which have been provided to the site by Delmarva Discussions) one at a time, two weeks prior to each scheduled discussion, read the book, then attend the program for that title. Each program will feature a presentation by a humanities scholar who will relate the book to the series theme, provide information on the author or historical background, and raise questions of meaning and possibilities of interpretation for the participants' consideration. Scholars hand out study questions and/or comments for participants' consideration either at the beginning of the presentation or at the break. Following a break for refreshments, the group will reconvene for discussion with the scholar as facilitator. Patrons may pick-up the next book in the series at the end of the program. While many participants will attend all of the sessions, books need to be available at the site through out the weeks of the program so patrons may begin or end their participation at any time. **Programs should be scheduled every other week on the same day and must be scheduled to meet for 2 hours.**

1. Prior to series

- a) Develop a strategy for keeping track of the books – some sites pencil numbers into the front covers (this may already be done) and use these assigned numbers to track which participants have which books.
(SEE SUGGESTED PROCEDURES FOR BOOKS)
- b) Create a sign-up list for interested participants. Most coordinators get a name and phone number. This can also be used to track the books. When participants sign up, they receive the book(s) for the upcoming session only.
- c) Arrange for someone to be present at each of the programs in the series. This can be the site coordinator, a staff person, or a volunteer. This person will be responsible for:
 - Greeting and introducing the scholar
 - Setting up refreshments
 - Introducing the program
 - Overseeing the program to make sure there's a break at the appropriate time
 - Passing out and collecting evaluations
 - Giving the scholar his/her invoice packet
 - Distributing the books for the next session
 - Writing an evaluation

2. At each program

- a) Set up the room. Generally a circular arrangement of chairs works best. The following items should be available:
 - Sign-in sheet
 - Name tags and pens
 - Water for scholar
 - Books for next session
 - Scholar biography/introduction
 - Evaluation forms and pencils
 - Refreshments



- b) Scholars should arrive about 15 minutes prior to the program (they've been asked to do so). Whoever is coordinating/observing that particular program should greet the scholar and make sure that water is available and that the room is set up to the scholar's satisfaction. Discuss with the scholar how to run the program – some scholars prefer to break after 45 minutes, some prefer after an hour; some scholars like to announce the break themselves, some like the on-site person to do it.
- c) At the beginning of the first session, the site person should introduce the series as part of Delmarva Discussions. S/He might want to say something about the series itself and why the specific topic was selected. At each session, s/he should introduce the scholar using the scholar introduction that has been provided. Please also mention any funding received for the series.
- d) A break is generally announced about halfway through the program. Breaks usually last about 15 minutes – the site person should get participants to regroup.
- e) During the break, the site person might want to distribute the books for the next session BUT PLEASE WAIT TO THE END OF THE PROGRAM TO DISTRIBUTE EVALUATIONS TO PARTICIPANTS! Distributing them during the break means that participants are evaluating the scholar based on half of the program. It also means that they aren't paying attention to the scholar or to the discussion while they fill them out.
- f) At the conclusion of the program, the site person should collect the books from that session and distribute the appropriate evaluation forms. Evaluations are very important, as we use them in grant application materials and to determine the most desirable and effective themes, books and scholars. Please encourage all participants to fill out the evaluation forms. Evaluations should be distributed as follows:
 - o **First session:** There are 2 evaluation forms for this session – the First Session Audience Evaluation form and the Scholar Evaluation
 - o **Second session:** There is one evaluation for this session, the Scholar Evaluation
 - o **Third Session** There are 2 evaluation forms for this session – the Final Session Audience Evaluation form and the Scholar Evaluation
 - o **PLEASE** make sure the site person also completes the staff evaluation of each session. These forms provide us with demographic and site information used to acquire grant funding!
- g) The site person should give the scholar his/her packet.
- h) At the end of the program, the site person should fill out and mail the Staff Evaluation and Audience Evaluation forms for that session. (These are important for us and it is easier to remember and get them turned in this way!)

3. After end of series

Retrieve any missing books (use the inventory sheet to keep track). The books and the book inventory sheet, along with remaining staff/audience evaluations should be sent within four weeks of the conclusion of the series. You may use the Delaware State Courier Service (if available to your site) or the US Postal Service. Please send to:

Bethany Hacker
Delmarva Discussions
c/o Delaware Division of Libraries
43 DuPont Highway
Dover, DE 19901

IF YOUR SERIES IS PARTIALLY FUNDED BY DELMARVA DISCUSSIONS GRANTS, PLEASE SEND COPIES OF ANY PRESS ARTICLES, ADS, LETTERS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS YOU SENT OUT AND ANY OTHER PUBLICITY MATERIALS YOU GENERATED.

DELMARVA DISCUSSIONS POLICIES CONCERNING SITES AND PROGRAMMING

1. Refunds of the site's fee for a program will be refunded in full as long as the request occurs within the same fiscal year, the series has not been rescheduled, and it is at least 2 weeks before the first program.
2. If imposed, a refund of fees paid for lost books will be made if the missing books are returned to Delmarva Discussions, replacement books have not yet been purchased, and it is before the start of a new fiscal year.
3. When available, grant funds will be used to support programming. Because of the specific requirements of grants, some sites may be eligible for more or less assistance than others.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE FOR BOOKS

All books must be returned to Delmarva Discussions.

- (1) Check the number of books you receive.

⇒ Each shipment will come with an inventory list. Please do this immediately so problems can be averted later!

- (2) Collect names, addresses, and telephone numbers of participants.

⇒ When participants pick up their first book, have them fill out a 3 x 5 card with their names, addresses, and telephone numbers. This will allow you to locate missing books. In addition, this will provide a list of participants to contact for future programs.

⇒ You could keep the cards in a small index box with alphabetical dividers.

⇒ You may use the telephone numbers to remind participants about the program or to remind them about returning books.

- (2) Have participants "sign-out" each book.

⇒ You may use the back of the index card or create a separate "sign-out" sheet for each book. The separate "sign-out" sheet is simpler for locating missing books.

⇒ Have participants list the book number you have marked or is already present (inside the book jacket).

- (3) Have participants "sign-in" each book when they return it.

⇒ You may have participants simply cross off the book when they return it.

- (4) Check the number of books you are returning.

⇒ Again use the inventory. Insert a copy with the books you send back at the end of the program. Because many of our series run each season, it is important that the books are all returned in a timely manner (within 4 weeks after the conclusion of the series). Delmarva Discussions may bill you for books not returned within this time.

⇒ Return books to Delaware State Library (You may be asked to send books to the next site that hosts the series).

Bethany Hacker
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Dover, DE 19901

GREAT IDEAS FROM OUR PAST PARTICIPATING SITES!

Ideas for generating a good audience:

1. Personally invite everyone who visits your site (You would be surprised how well this works. The key is to personally invite them and hand them the brochure!).
2. Keep the number of participants under 20.
3. Contact local volunteer organizations, senior centers, student centers, museums, libraries, churches, and community groups (garden club, century club, historical society). Send them multiple flyers/brochures.
4. Mail out flyers to your mailing/membership/friends organization list.
5. Invite the press to the first discussion program.
6. Post the information on your website and in your newsletter.
7. Offer a child friendly program at the same time so parents can bring along their children.
8. Encourage those that sign up to tell/bring a friend.
9. Let people know they do not have attend all the programs and they can come as they are able.
10. Place an ad in the local paper.
11. Give away a purchased copy of each book used in the series through a radio trivia question give-away (the question to be related to the series - an inexpensive radio ad usually available to non-profits!).

Expand the programming:

1. Show films relating to the theme to compare and contrast for “off weeks”.
2. Organize a trip to a place that relates to the theme for the week after the series or smaller, local trips for “off weeks”.
3. Set-up displays before and during the programming period: books by the same author or within the theme; a small exhibit relating to the theme (partner with a local museum to have them set-up a small exhibit or borrow from their collection).
4. Offer a workshop or demonstration related to the theme, such as writing, cooking, traditional crafts, etc. before the series begins, as an introduction, or afterward to finish it off.
5. Use the Suggested Additional Reading list to keep the group reading/discussing the theme without a scholar, until you can start another series!
6. Invite the local cable access station to tape one of the sessions for broadcast.