

A “Real” Distinguished Speakers Program for the IEEE Information Theory Society

Frank R. Kschischang Andrea Goldsmith

Board of Governors Meeting
Champaign, September 23, 2008

IT Society Distinguished Speakers Program

Current Status

Coordinator: Second Vice President

Program is open to: Any IEEE entity

To Request a Speaker: Contact Coordinator

Speaker Expenses: The IT Society will pay up to 50% of travel costs up to \$500 up to once per year for any IEEE entity for distinguished speakers.

IT Society Distinguished Speakers Program

Current Status

Coordinator: Second Vice President

Program is open to: Any IEEE entity

To Request a Speaker: Contact Coordinator

Speaker Expenses: The IT Society will pay up to 50% of travel costs up to \$500 up to once per year for any IEEE entity for distinguished speakers.

Who are the Distinguished Speakers?

The Distinguished Speakers of the Society are all current members of the IT Board of Governors as well as all former members for the previous twenty years.

URL: <http://www.itsoc.org/society/lecturers.html> (try clicking)

Some Observations:

- The travel expense amount (\$500) seems low.
- The criterion for a distinguished speaker is not particularly compelling, and it has an unusually long (20 year) window.
- The current program does not benefit the society in any concrete way, and is rarely taken advantage of.

Some Observations:

- The travel expense amount (\$500) seems low.
- The criterion for a distinguished speaker is not particularly compelling, and it has an unusually long (20 year) window.
- The current program does not benefit the society in any concrete way, and is rarely taken advantage of.

Goals of a DLS

- To benefit chapters.
- To provide a bridge between chapters and distinguished members of the society.
- To promote information theory.

What do Other Societies Do?

Signal Processing Society

- Up to ten “technically diverse and geographically dispersed individuals of distinction who are members of the Society, who are recognized experts in their fields of endeavor, and who are capable of delivering a message of importance to the technical community and Chapter members.”
- The formal term of appointment is two years, with five individuals appointed each year.
- Appointment is via a nomination and selection process handled by the Awards Board and approved by the BoG.
- Program is open to Signal Processing Society Chapters only.
- Funding up to \$1750 per year (per Chapter) may be available to help defray speaker travel expenses.

URL:

<http://www.signalprocessingsociety.org/lecturers/information/>

What do Other Societies Do?

Communications Society

- Distinguished Lecture Tours: funding is provided to enable a lecturer to address multiple groups during a lecture tour (at least three groups in three separate locations within reasonable proximity) — individual lectures are not funded.
- Funding is provided, as required, to cover travel expenses. Living expenses and transportation are the responsibility of the Chapter.
- Up to five lecture tours a year will be supported in each of four Regions: Asia/Pacific, Europe-Africa-Middle-East, Latin America, and North America. The Director in each region acts as facilitator. No more than two tours allowed per year per lecturer.
- Effective 2008, as part of the overall program, all lecturers must record their lecture after the tour for the Online Distinguished Lecturers Program.
- Some 37 lecturers (with terms of two years, optionally four years) are listed on the web site along with potential topics for talks.

What do Other Societies Do?

Control Systems Society

- Provides 80% of expenses (up to \$1000 for a speaker within the same continent, and up to \$2000 for a trans-continental speaker.)
- Open to any IEEE entity.
- Organized by a Distinguished Lecturers Committee.
- Web site lists 20 lecturers with detailed biographies and abstracts of talks.

URL: [http:](http://ieeecss.org/main.php?levelsecid=209&secid=209&expandsecid=184)

[//ieeecss.org/main.php?levelsecid=209&secid=209&expandsecid=184](http://ieeecss.org/main.php?levelsecid=209&secid=209&expandsecid=184)

Our Proposal

IT Society Distinguished Speakers Program

- Follow the Signal Processing Society Model, and appoint 10 geographically and technically dispersed individuals as distinguished lecturers, each with a nominal two-year term, extendable to 3 years provided that no more than one lecture has been given in the first two years.
- Place under control of the Chapters Committee, with final BoG approval. The Committee will issue an annual call for nominations for speakers. (Should work out suitable criteria, but the obvious ones are technical excellence, a topic of wide interest, and good speaking ability.)
- Provide up to \$1750 per chapter per year (IT Chapters, including Joint Chapters, only) in support of travel and accommodation expenses for distinguished speakers
- Chapters Committee will be responsible for advertising this to the Chapters, and for maintaining up-to-date information about this program on the Society's web site.