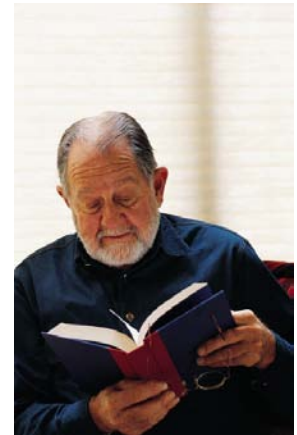


Working with the program scholar: How to forge a successful partnership



- **Contact the scholar in advance:** Understand that professors juggle teaching several courses with their own writing, committee responsibilities, and possibly administrative duties, so they need time to plan their presentation. Some of them may not have read the book before, so they need time to read it and do some research. Call two or three weeks in advance to discuss the program and what you'd both like to have happen.
- **Share your knowledge** of the participants and their general responses to the books so far:
 - typical turnout
 - likelihood that participants have finished the book
 - how discussions of the themes have developed over the weeks
 - what the participants seem to prefer in terms of format, e.g., small group discussions, formal presentation from scholar, substantial time in informal give-and-take with group and scholar. Don't be afraid to comment that the group has been asking for more/less information from the scholar—feedback between participants and scholars throughout the program can greatly enhance each meeting



- **Ask for tips** in preparing readers for the next book: Let's say Dr. Smith is coming to discuss *Winter in the Blood* on April 12 and Dr. Johnson will discuss *Ceremony* three weeks later. Before the meeting on the 12th, contact Dr. Johnson and ask her what the participants might focus on as they read



Ceremony, what problems they might encounter, etc. so you can share these things with the group BEFORE they begin reading the next book. This may not always be possible, but orienting readers before they read can help discussions and resistance.

see back →

- **Post questions:** Offer to post scholar's questions on the web page or on library bulletin board where participants can easily access them. This can also help participants focus on certain issues that will make reading more enjoyable and the discussion richer



- **Provide directions** to the program location and confirm the day, date and time. Provide suggestions for restaurants and hotels if he/she has to drive more than an hour.
- **Send a thank you note** after the program. If you have any participant feedback, include a summary.



Adapted from a "Let's Talk About It" workshop presentation given by Michele Payne, Boise State University, 2000.