

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

Committee Name: Speakers & Lectures

Academic Year Covered by Report 2020-2021

Date Report Submitted June 16, 2021

Report Submitted by Marian Fragola

Number of times committee met\_ 4

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The University went into its Covid-19 response in March 2020, which impacted the work of the Speakers & Lectures Committee. In addition, the atmosphere around the election and the social justice movement that was happening on campus and around the country impacted the work of the committee. At the same time, the committee continued to meet virtually and planned and implemented a successful virtual event in February 2021, discussed in more detail below.

## **SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION ITEMS/ACTIVITIES OF COMMITTEE**

The committee met four times over Zoom (October 7, November 30, and December 21, 2020, and January 27, 2021) with numerous additional email communications between committee members.

As part of its charge to work with other campus partners to bring high-level speakers to campus, the committee contributed \$2,000 to support the Elkan Lecturer in Science and Society with the Park Scholars. Thomas Hager, an author who wrote *The Alchemy of Air*, a prior NC State common reading book, presented a talk entitled “How to Talk About Science in a Post-Truth World” on October 1, 2020. The event had 250 attendees. The Speakers & Lectures Committee received acknowledgement for that sponsorship, which can be seen at this link: <https://park.ncsu.edu/2020/01/03/thomas-hager/>.

In addition, the committee decided to offer a free, open to the public session with Rich Harwood following the Institute for Emerging Issues (IEI) Forum. On February 18, 2021, Mr. Harwood delivered a keynote entitled “A Call to Step Forward: Bridging Divides and Healing Our Communities.” Mr. Harwood was introduced by McKensy Heavlin, one of the committee members, and other committee members helped moderate questions

from the chat. Sheri Schwab was instrumental in inviting Mr. Harwood and working on the logistics of the presentation.

According to IEI's records, 214 attendees clicked the session and the talk had 185 unique viewers. A portion of the talk can be seen on IEI's YouTube page here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwtEZ6jRuqU>

In a post-event evaluation, 36 people who answered the evaluation question: Rich Harwood was an appropriate, high quality speaker to bring to this event (likert scale of 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree) replied in this way: 5=61%, 4=25%, 3=14%, 2=0%, 1=0%.

Despite the challenges of working during a pandemic and completely changing how the committee delivered content to audiences, the committee was able to fulfill its charge.

**RECOMMENDATION FOR REVISION OF CHARGE AND/OR MEMBERSHIP CONFIGURATION (if applicable)**

Committee member Kevin Potter, Research Professor, Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources, has agreed to stand for election to the chair position.