



Policy on Accessibility and Microphone Use

The days of “I’ll just speak loudly” are over. We acknowledge and respect the needs of our colleagues and visitors for amplification at department events as a matter of accessibility and collegiality. We therefore set forth the following principles and rules for microphone use.

1. Microphones are to be used at all History Department and Department-sponsored events with more than 10 people. This means that microphones will be available in all rooms where such events take place, and they will be convenient to use. If you are organizing an event sponsored by the department, you must include microphones in your planning and budget.
2. Every room will have at least two microphones, at least one of which will be wireless.
3. Before the start of every event, a delegated person (normally the event chair or organizer) will make sure that the microphones are in working order and that the speaker/s’ mics and portable mics are functioning such that everyone in the room can hear.
4. At the start of every event, a delegated person (normally the event chair or organizer) will explain the logic behind microphone use and announce that everyone must use microphones. The same delegated person will also serve as “enforcer,” reminding people to use a microphone each time they speak and interrupting if they begin speaking without one.

Through repetition, education, and uniform enforcement, members of the community will come to understand why microphones are important, will work together to use them, and will encourage others to use them. This long-term approach to changing an institution's climate requires a critical mass of people, including the able-bodied, to affirm and practice accessibility. Please remember that disabilities can be visible or invisible, and please avoid assumptions about how colleagues and guests are able to participate.