

Desk Fest is the event at the beginning of the academic year in which the graduate students choose desks and volunteer for graduate student positions. The timing depends on new student orientation and TA training. So the date and time are predetermined, you can ask Melissa. Also lunch (usually pizza) will be provided.

## 1 Structure of Event

### **Before Desk Fest:**

The rules for Desk Fest and the list of graduate student positions should be communicated to all of the graduate students with at least two weeks prior to the deadline for response. Along with the rules, some mechanism for indicating the following must be included: name, year (the year of graduate education you are about to begin), any people in a desired group, and any proxy that will be needed. This information can be gathered with a google form, email response, or any way the organizers deem most appropriate. This should also include asking for any dietary restrictions or other accommodations that need to be made.

After all responses are collected, the organizers must order all grad students and groups that will be choosing desks according to the rules below. This ordering must be communicated to all graduate students before the day of Desk Fest.

### **During Desk Fest:**

It is the responsibility of the organizers to provide some method for everyone in the room to see what desks are available and which have been claimed, and by whom. This is usually done by drawing the seat maps on the available chalkboards. The organizers then go through the draw order, giving every individual/group one minute to choose a desk or office. After desks are chosen, volunteer positions are chosen.

## 2 Rules

### **How the Ranking is Decided:**

Students choosing to keep their desk do not need to be included in the ranking list.

Every student that is choosing a desk is initially assigned a number corresponding to their year in graduate school (e.g. a matriculating student is assigned a 1). Visiting or non-degree students are assigned a 0. Students transferring to Cornell because their advisor moved here are assigned the number corresponding to what year they would be at the previous institution. Groups of graduate students (of size 2 or 3) are assigned the arithmetic mean of their corresponding numbers. So if a fourth year student and a fifth year student would like an office together, then their group would be assigned a 4.5.

The graduate students with a ranking are then ordered by decreasing rank. So more senior students and groups are towards the top of this list. For individuals and groups with the same rank, a random ordering is chosen. This is the preliminary order. To make the final order, first the number of spaces in small offices needs to be confirmed; historically this has been 20 seats, four 3-person offices and four 2-person offices. Then of the first twenty people (counted as individuals not as

groups, so a 3 person group is 3 people not 1 entity) on the preliminary rankings, groups are moved to the top. This means that of the people that are *guaranteed* to get a small office if they would like to, groups choose first. This allows groups, with enough seniority, to get an office together. Note that this only applies to people who are guaranteed a small office. If, for example, a group of 2 are the 20th and 21st people on the list, they will not be moved to the front of the draw order, because they would not be guaranteed a small office spot. So to reiterate: of the first 20 people (or  $n$  where  $n$  = number of small office spots), groups choose first.

This then forms the final ranking and the order in which desks will be chosen.

### **Rules Regarding Desk Fest Procedure**

- If a student does not respond to the organizers by the deadline that is set, they automatically forfeit the right to keep their desk.
- After the deadline for responses is has passed, decisions on whether to keep or not keep a desk, or to form a group, are final. For example, a group cannot form after realizing they may be able to get an office, or a student cannot choose to keep their desk after realizing it is unlikely they will be able to get the new spot they wanted.
- It is *not* the responsibility of the organizers to make the information of who is keeping their desk and who is not public before the final draw order is formed. This helps avoid non-comradely scheming or pressuring anyone to keep/not-keep a desk.
- If you have a spot in a small office you are not eligible to keep your desk. You must choose a desk at Desk Fest (which is allowed to be the same one if it works out) either individually or as part of a group.
- If you are going to be away from Cornell for a semester you are not eligible to choose a desk in the small offices. The exception to this is if you choose along with another student who will be away the other semester (i.e. the desk will be filled for the whole academic year).
- Any student choosing a desk may designate as a proxy another graduate student who will be at Desk Fest to choose for them. This choice of proxy must be communicated to the organizers before the response form deadline. If you do not attend and your proxy does not attend and choose a desk for you, you will be moved to the bottom of the draw order and assigned a desk after everyone else has chosen.
- Individuals and groups get 1 minute during Desk Fest to make their decision. This prevents lengthy deliberations or consultations with proxies that would inordinately delay the process. The individual or group may choose any remaining open desks, or defer until a later period if desired. For example “until James chooses a desk” or “until desk 20 in Malott 120 is taken”. Such a deferral may occur at most once. If no choice or deferral has been made after this minute, the individual or group is moved to the bottom of the ranking and will get another opportunity to choose at that time.
- Choices are final. Once a desk is chosen, it is locked in for the year.
- Once desks are chosen, if you are not keeping your desk/office you are responsible for cleaning it out, thoroughly. It is disrespectful to whoever has the desk next, as well as Melissa, who is often the one who has to move your garbage, if they are left dirty. This includes and fridges or other appliances/furniture that go with the office.