

PLANNING TIPS FOR EVENTS

Hosting programs and events help your organization achieve its goals, teach leadership skills and foster camaraderie within your organization. However, it takes planning and forethought to ensure success. The following outlines some basic programming tips for live and in-person events.

Concept

Consider the following as you develop the concept of your program or event.

- Determine the goals of the program. **Examples:** to bring a community together, to educate, to expose individuals to different points of view, to support other programs, to socialize, etc.
- Brainstorm the type of event and possible themes that will match your organizational goals. **Examples:** speaker, film, dance, fundraiser, trip, food, festival, athletic event
- Decide on a program within your budget.
- Discuss the options within your organization and make a group decision.

Planning

There are many components that are involved in planning an event. Below are a few examples.

Date and Time: Find a convenient date for members in the group and for the entertainment/guest speaker. Choose a date that does not conflict with other existing campus programs. Determine a convenient time for your targeted audience.

Location: Events can take place on or off campus. Estimate the attendance to make sure that you reserve an adequate facility. Determine the type of space that is needed for your event and any special needs you may have. Special facility needs may include the need for: chairs, tables, lighting, sound, a stage, open space, a cooking area, an outdoor area, lecture hall, etc.

Budget: All costs associated with the event will be assumed by the student organization. Project all expenses and income such as fees, advertising, security, food, etc. Brainstorm on and off campus funding sources.

Entertainment/Speaker: Determine the type of entertainment/guest speaker you would like to invite. Research campus, local, regional and national possibilities.

Publicity: Design publicity strategies for targeted audiences. Design promotions to fit the style and theme of the program. Be creative, neat, and accurate. Include the name of the program, date, time, place and ticket information if necessary. Distribute publicity at least two weeks in advance.

Food: Determine food needs. Will the program be a dinner or reception? A dinner requires a full meal and a reception only calls for light refreshments. Will your organization prepare the food or hire a caterer? Be aware of current University policies for food at events.

Implementation

Before the program: Develop a list of tasks that need to occur before, during, and after the event; then determine who is responsible for each one (i.e. clean-up crew, stage crew, publicity, and hospitality).

On the day of the program: Arrive early to check on room arrangements and the set up. Prepare a brief introduction statement to welcome guests and begin the program.

Following the program: Create an evaluation of the program to distribute at the next meeting. Determine if you have accomplished your program goal. Record both positive and negative results for future planning. Prepare a financial statement of actual expenditures. Send thank you notes to appropriate people.