

Planning a program for 15 people takes as much care as planning for 500 – a student organization will go through similar steps and planning strategies to make sure the event goes smoothly. The list below will help student organizations in helping them plan special events on campus.

- **Before planning -**
 - Determine the goals of the program
 - Brainstorm the type of program and possible themes that will fulfill goals
 - Decide on a program that fits within your budget.
 - Is the program unique?

- **Steps for planning -**
 - Pick a Date: Consult CSI for conflicting events and Events Planning or other appropriate office for facility availability.
 - Choose a Location: Project attendance, determine program needs - chairs, tables, lighting, sound, stage, open space, and make room and equipment reservations.
 - Decide on a Time: Determine a convenient time for the targeted audience. Try not to plan a program when major organizations have standing meetings or events.
 - Don't Forget Your Budget: Project all expenses and incomes. Brainstorm additional funding sources.
 - Think About Entertainment: Determine the type of entertainment, research local, regional and national possibilities, contact entertainers and **negotiate** contracts. Remember that you do not need to agree to everything in the rider. Contact CSI for ideas of performers.
 - Decide Whether You'll Have Food: Determine food needs, design a menu, and make arrangements to get the food – the food should arrive a minimum of 45 minutes before the guests arrive. If the event is at Norris, you must order through Sodexo-USA. If you feel you need to bring in outside food, it must be certified through Events Planning and make arrangements to have proper serving materials.

Basics of Programming

- Think About Publicity: Design strategies for targeted audiences, make the campaign fit the style and theme of the event, think of innovative new strategies. Any publicity **must** comply with the Campus Publicity Guidelines.
- Consider any Other Issues: These might include travel arrangements, lodging, postage, decorations, cleanup, security, and volunteers.
- Make a checklist of tasks and supplies for the night of the event.
- Assign tasks for the night. Indicate a point person for the volunteers to check-in with.

- **Backwards Planning Helps Students –**
 - Make a list of tasks that must be completed before the program, including publicity, reservations, travel arrangements, etc.
 - Put the tasks in order, noting any with pre-set specific due dates.
 - Using a calendar, start with the last task before the program actually begins. Consider how long it will take to complete, and write it in however many days before the event will take place.

- **Day of Event –**
 - Plan arrival times based on the following:
 - There should be extra time planned for decorations – you will find there is never enough time for decorations.
 - Planners should arrive 1 hour before entertainment.
 - Entertainment should arrive 1 hour before doors open.
 - Doors should open ½ before event starts.
 - Be flexible and anticipate the worst-case scenario.
 - Alumni will show up early, be prepared for them
 - Upon arrival, go through checklist to make sure things are in order.
 - Check set up of venue
 - Touch base with venue contact
 - Tech. Support
 - Volunteers should know where key services are located
 - Restroom
 - Water fountains

- **Post Event -**
 - Pre-set a completion date for follow-up evaluations
 - Surveys
 - Event Reports
 - If event happens every year, consider creating or updating a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)
 - Send Thank You notes within 3 days of event