



Event Guidelines

Guidelines for successful event planning, execution, and evaluation.

Purpose

All events should have a clearly defined purpose that is measurable and aligned with the College of Arts & Letters values.

Equity – inclusivity, diversity, social justice, equitable access, accessibility

Openness – transparency, open process, candor, accountability, open source

Community – collaboration, collegiality, empathy, respect, connection

Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities will minimize conflict, miscommunication, mistakes and burnout.

Stakeholders—The target audience(s) that benefits from this event.

Content Matter Specialists/Advisors—A group of experts that advise the committee on content, process, resources, messaging and communications.

Chair of committee—The person that calls the meetings, sets the agenda, follows up on assignments given, and ensures that the committee make up and decision-making processes are aligned with College of Arts & Letters values.

GoFast Team (worker bees) The group of working committee members who meet regularly to do the planning, execution, and evaluation of an event. It is often helpful to include the fiscal officer, budget assistant, or other support staff representative that may be providing support to the event, in the committee meetings and/or meeting notes follow up.

Support Staff Fiscal officers oversee the event budget; set up Cashnet or Eventbrite accounts to manage registration; reconcile accounts; provide updates and final report to committee.

With prior planning, a support staff delegate may do some clerical tasks such as printing name badges, signage, assist with distribution of flyers, order supplies, coordinate catering order and deliveries. Support staff should not be used to run errands off campus for the event committee.

Planning

A strong rule of thumb is to allow for a **minimum of 6 weeks** planning prior to hosting an event. This allows for adequate time to develop and execute a marketing and communication plan, as well as, coordinating event logistics.

Planning should take 80% of the effort for hosting an event. Committees can avoid errors, delays, and missed opportunities by taking the time to plan.

Event Guidelines—an overview of events, resources, and committee structure.
(*this document*)



Event Preplanning checklist—One-page dashboard reference guide to assist in preparing a Plan of Work (POW). *Located in TEAMS Event Channel.*

Event Plan of Work (aka Statement of Work)—A roadmap for your event. Using the CAL Plan of Work template, you can easily plan your event start to finish. *Located in TEAMS Event Channel.*

Communications Plan—A detailed plan should be in the Event Plan of Work. Additionally, follow a hard rule of no surprises—that means for every step of the process. Assume that there aren't things being done behind the scenes; if it needs to be done make sure it's been assigned to someone. Avoid ambushing support staff or the fiscal officer with last minute event directions or expenditures. Plan ahead, communicate, and work the plan.

Planned data collection—Benchmark measurable outcomes. Sign in sheets at event. Pre-event/or post-event surveys.

Accessibility—Ensure your event communications, venue, menu, and presenters accommodate accessibility needs. (eg: Always use the microphone.)

Budget Planning—Event budgets should be prepared in consultation with the fiscal officer, or their delegate, prior to expenses being incurred. There should be no budget surprises during the event planning and execution.

Resources

[CAL online calendar](#)—An online calendar that feeds to CAL, department, and center websites. Postings should be placed no less than 6 weeks prior to an event. Training and access is offered to departments, centers, and event committees. [Set up Training](#)

TEAMS Events Channel—An online space to access event planning templates, have conversations, ask questions, share ideas. [Request access](#)

[Trello Events Resources Board](#)—A public Trello board contact book of resources on who to call to reserve venues, catering, graphic designers, printing, videographers, photographers, swag, and more.

[CAL Connect Events & Outreach Resource Web Page](#)

[MARCOM Templates](#) flyers, social media, PowerPoint presentations, letterhead, and more. Great resources that ensure your event marketing is in alignment with the CAL and MSU brand. Additional links to information on brand basics, social media, use of brand and logos.

Accessibility

[MSU Web access Policy and guidelines](#)

Events Subject Matter Experts

[CAL Event Project Manager](#)—Mainly focused on College level events, the event project manager is available to mentor, train, and advise department and center level event planning committees. Assists with navigating resources, budget



development, brainstorming swag ideas, and cross-checking timelines. The event project manager also develops content for the Teams Events Channel, Cal Connect website, and Trello board.

[Event Intern](#)—Assists the CAL Event Project manager with planning and hosting events. May assist department and centers with event calendar training, development of flyers, collecting data for event marketing and promotion.

[Advancement](#)— Experts in knowing our CAL alumni. Departments and Centers can request lists for Alumni engagement and outreach. Enhance your event by including an alumni component and/or assist advancement's work by sharing information on your event so it can be communicated to interested alumni.

[MARCOM](#)—Mainly focused on College level external communications and promotions, the College of Arts & Letters award winning Marketing and Communications (MARCOM) department is a high quality group of subject matter experts that can advise, review, critique, and guide Department and Center promotions: graphic design; press releases, articles; photography & video; website design; social media marketing; marketing research and event marketing.

[CAL Accessibility](#)

MSU [Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities](#)

Restrictions

[Manual of Business Procedures](#) MSU Policies and procedures on all things financial. Table of contents and/or search box are easy to navigate to find answers to questions event planners often encounter.

[SECTION 44: Issuing Gifts, Gift Cards, and Prizes](#)

[SECTION 45: Food and Beverage, Business Functions](#)

Includes expense limitations for retirement parties.

Includes MSU Alcohol policy at events.

[SECTION 49: Raffle Policy](#)

[SECTION 70: Travel Policies & Procedures](#)

[SECTION 71: Honoraria, Speaker Fee and Performer Payments](#)

Media release form—Individual signed release for photography and/or videography

Presenter permission to record presentations

Off campus pick up of supplies and/or food

Anyone who is going off campus to pick up catering and/or supplies for an event needs to have an approved Travel Request (Pre-Trip) in place so they are covered by MSU insurance in case of an accident.

Support staff should not be expected to run errands off campus for the event committee.

Venue restrictions on bringing in food and beverages



Bringing in your own food and beverage for an event may not be permissible according to the rules of the venue. Check this out ahead of time.

Evaluating your event

Every event should have a postmortem to capture the lessons learned, analyze post event survey and feedback, review budget and objective outcomes.

What makes a good event?

- Planning—planning—planning! (*Verbal ideas in a hallway conversation do not constitute a plan.*)
- The planning committee includes diverse voices and respects new ideas.
- The committee understands that decisions as a committee are binding. The committee delegates decision making authority to individuals and/or subcommittees. Individual committee members may not redirect resources or make decisions that are in conflict with the authority and direction of the committee as a whole.
- There's a budget and it includes expenses for professional graphic design, photographer, videographer if those features are desired.
- Graphic design of flyers and publications align with MSU branding and CAL brand guidelines.
- Promotion and marketing begins at least 6 weeks prior to the event.
- Strong Communication --no surprises for committee, support staff, and the budget.
- Event starts and ends on time.
- Stays within the budget.
- Does not cause burdensome physical or emotional labor for committee members or support staff.
- Has good attendance.
- Meets measurable goals and objectives identified at the beginning of the planning process.
- Stakeholders are engaged in measurable ways.



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