

# Student Organization Basic Event and Timeline Logistics

\*Be sure to check out the Event Planning Checklist\*

## Event Idea:

- What do you hope to accomplish?
- What population will your event or activity attract? Is it open to the community?
- What would motivate people to attend? Ask “why” you are choosing to host this event.
- Does the event reflect your group’s mission? What are your goals?
- Is this a social or fundraising event?
  - What will you do with the funds raised?
- Organizing a race? Download our Race Checklist!

## Location:

- What size of crowd will be in attendance?
- What size venue will you need?
- Do you want to hold this event on or off campus? Will it be indoor or outdoor?
  - Outdoor Program Requests can be found [here](#).
- For outdoor events, make sure to have an indoor back-up plan.
- Is the event accessible for everyone (handicap accessible, ADA compliant)?
- Keep in mind, places on campus, like the Fieldhouse, may charge a rental fee.

## Choosing your date:

- Check the MSU Calendar to make sure there aren’t major conflicts.
- Consider the impact of religious/federal holidays and breaks.
- Know that big events—like the Career Fair—will make reservations in the SUB very difficult. It helps to think through what you’re competing with for attendance & booking. It’s best to book as far ahead as possible.
- Keep in mind that academic obligations come first, and events during midterms, reading period or exams are strongly discouraged. Common hour exams are something to check before scheduling an event, they can heavily effect your turn out!

## Budget:

- Does your group already have a budget? Surprisingly, not all student organizations start out with funding for the events that they plan. Finding co-sponsors who can help cover some of the up-front costs can help make your event a reality. Use the OSE website to find other student organizations, departments, and offices that might be interested in partnering.
- If your group does not have a budget, make sure to apply for funding at least 3 weeks before your event.
- If you do have a budget, laying out priorities for the different aspects of your event is a good place to start.
- If your event is something relatively simple like a lecture, the majority of your budget will most likely go towards paying printing posters and speaker fees. Because student groups are allowed to use SUB meeting rooms and ballrooms free of charge, it’s a good option to keep costs low and be in a central location, but other fees may apply (such as audio/visual).
  - However, there are other costs to consider depending on what kind of event you are hosting. Conference Services can provide a variety of things to help make your event successful, but there is a charge.
- Keep in mind, places on campus like the Fieldhouse may cost money to use.

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## Co-Sponsors/Volunteers:

- Will you have co-sponsors?
- Will you need volunteers? How do you plan to recruit them?
- What tasks will you have for volunteers?
- Who will supervise and keep volunteers accountable?
- Do you need professional support (security, medical personnel, catering, ID checkers, bartenders, janitors, A/V productions)?

A great resource on seeking sponsorships and/or donations can be found [here](#).

## Food:

While events are exciting and should be enough to bring your audience in, everyone knows that food is *always* a welcome addition. However, where and when you have your event or meeting will dictate the what you are able to do.

- For the purposes of liability, quality, food safety, and control, all food sold and provided **on campus** must be supplied by University Food Services/Catering. Food may not be served on campus by a commercial or domestic source to be used as a promotional tool for a commercial entity.
- An **exception** to this rule allows for Student Organizations meeting in the SUB after 5:00pm with a gathering of less than 40 people that consists entirely of group members and no outside individuals. Groups are encouraged to utilize existing food venues after hours. However, these groups may order food from outside venues.
- Any food or beverage, served to the public on campus, must be prepared in a licensed, commercial kitchen, and must have a Food License issued, either by the State of Montana, or a Temporary Event Food Permit issued by the Registered Sanitarian. A Temporary Event Vendor Application (TEVA) may be accessed online (<https://tofu.msu.montana.edu/ufs/vendor>), completed and submitted to the University Sanitarian for review. Once approved, a Food Permit will be issued. Food Safety Online Training, with completion of a quiz, will be requested, for each individual handling food.
- For information on catering, visit [here](#). Student groups can order off the [Student Group Menu](#) for reduced prices. If what you are looking for isn't on the student group menu, your club can automatically receive 10% off [their regular menu](#).
- Food should be ordered at least two weeks in advance. Final headcount should be confirmed 48 hours before event.

## Alcohol:

- Student groups are allowed to service alcohol at events, as long as [policies and procedures](#) are followed. The Alcohol Request Form can be found [HERE](#).
- The Alcohol Request Form should be submitted at least three weeks before the event.
- If you plan to serve alcohol, you need to have security hired for the event.
- Groups may order full bar service in which the University's licensed provider will bring all supplies and staff to serve alcohol products to customers, including hard liquor, wine and beer. This can either be a hosted or a non-hosted event. The minimum charge for this service is \$350 for MSU events, and \$500 for non-MSU events. This means that if the group does not buy at least \$350 or \$500 from the bar they will pay the difference to meet that amount. For other methods of serving alcohol, please see [this document](#).
- For off-campus events, be sure to check with the event venue.

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## Advertisement:

To have a successful event, it must be advertised well, especially due to the ever-increasing competition of events of campus.

- Think about the concept of your event and how it relates to your advertising campaign.
- Don't start too late! Consider a multi-prong approach with waves of different kinds of advertising.
- Word of mouth is probably the best form of advertising. Make sure your group members feel ownership over the event and will recruit friends and colleagues to attend.
- Make sure to proof everything carefully before it goes out. Always include the date, time and location, as well as the event description, contact email address, and/or website for questions.
- The OSE has a student graphic designer available for student organizations to utilize to create club graphics. More information can be found [here](#).
- For more information and guidelines, please check out our Advertising Guide [here](#).

## Security and Risk Management:

- Depending on type and size of event, security may be required. Check with your venue about this requirement and additional costs associated.
- Having alcohol at your event will require your group hire security for your event. Security for SUB events will be hired by your event coordinator with Conference Services.
- Crowd Management, an independent company is the university contractor for this service. One security guard is required per hundred people attending, with a charge of \$18/hr.
- Please spend some time thinking about these items to create a Risk Management Plan:
  - What will occur at the event?
  - How the event will be managed?
  - Who will be in charge?
  - What controls will be in place to reduce the possibility of injury to persons or damage to property?
  - Address additional items of concern or key issues?

## Miscellaneous:

- Delegation and teamwork is essential to a successful event. Consider making sub-committees in the respective areas to help give everyone ownership in addition to logically breaking out the tasks.
- What equipment will you need (lighting, sound, stage, projector, screen, DVD player)?
  - Laptop, projector, screens are available through OSE.
- For off-campus guests, there is no long term free parking on campus. All parking lots are permit only Monday through Friday from 6am to 6pm excluding staff holidays. The pay lot is located on the first floor of the parking garage at Grant and 7<sup>th</sup>; guests must pay at the parking kiosk. There are also SB, E, F, and daily hangtags available through University Police. For more information, visit the [Parking Services](#) page.
- Are you planning on using decorations? Are there restrictions on decorations in the event space?
- Are you showing a movie? Make sure you have purchased the necessary public viewing rights.
- Consider making your event a ChampChange Event! Please fill out an [event submission](#), send an email to [champchange@montana.edu](mailto:champchange@montana.edu), or call 406.994.7627.

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**Timeline:** While it's easy to decide that a Halloween Dance is a great idea, making it happen in a two-week window is something that could be a little stressful. Ideally, planning your event well in advance makes it much easier to keep your stress level down, and have things run smoothly.

- **Initially:**
  - Meet with your advisor
  - Start planning event logistics
  - Check space/location availability
- **4 weeks before the event:**
  - Confirm event logistics
  - Start creating graphics/advertisements
- **3 weeks before the event:**
  - Add to MSU Today and calendar
  - Apply for necessary funding
- **2 weeks prior to the event:**
  - Reconfirm date, time, location
  - Confirm catering/vendors
  - Start advertising
  - Check event list for loose ends
  - Reserve any A/V needs through OSE (such as laptop, projector, tables)
- **1 week before event:**
  - Confirm volunteers
  - Have a volunteer checklist
  - Any logistical details
  - Send catering final headcount
- **Day of event:**
  - Have to-do list
  - Rehearsal, if necessary
  - Come early to set up
  - Clean and take down after event is complete
- **Post event:**
  - Write thank you notes to all sponsors and volunteers
  - Return all equipment
  - Process financial paperwork
  - Complete event evaluation for funding sources.
  - Reflect! How did the event go? Were your event goals met? Is there anything you would do different?

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