



Event Planning Timeline

NOTE: This timeline is to be used to spark ideas and reminders for you to create your own timeline specifically tailored to your needs. Please keep in mind that every college/university maintains deadlines that may in all likelihood be different than the ones appearing here. Also note that many of the items can be done in advance of their deadline or, if in a rush—after they should have been completed.

One Semester in Advance

- ◆ Survey students
 - Beyond board/committee and friends
 - Do you have a target audience built-in?
 - Phone/paper surveys – consider raffle
 - Use event evaluations to solicit more ideas
- ◆ Review past program evaluations and reports
- ◆ Establish budgets
- ◆ Determine audience: campus-only, open to general public, all-ages, family, etc.
- ◆ Choose events
 - Does it meet your mission?
 - Does it move your organization forward?
 - Does it serve/help your target audience?
- ◆ Choose event coordinator
- ◆ Check other calendars for conflicts
 - Your own organization
 - Other student organizations (Greek-letter organizations, governing organizations, etc.)
 - Athletics
 - Scheduling office
 - Buildings and grounds
 - Academic calendar (Avoid finals, Spring Break, etc.)
 - Holidays (school, religious (more than just Christian))
- ◆ Reserve locations/venues (include as many details as possible – and remember that the earlier submitted = the more likely you'll get your first choice!)
 - Reserve rain location for outdoor events
 - Green room (offstage preparation area)
 - Dressing room(s)
- ◆ Contact agent/performers – get all necessary information, but be careful not to verbally commit to anything
- ◆ Consider liabilities/risk associated with event
- ◆ Identify possible co-sponsors
- ◆ Decide upon need for tickets, costs
- ◆ Consider people power needed for event – be realistic with your resources
- ◆ Create event checklist/calendar with specific dates and people responsible for each item on list

Two-Three Months in Advance

- ◆ Contract performers **NOTE:** Contracts are sometimes-complicated legal documents. DO NOT sign any contract, or agree verbally without appropriate permission from your advisor. Some performers require much more advance booking than others.
- ◆ Reserve housing for performers
- ◆ Obtain meal tickets/plan for performer meals
- ◆ Order supplies
 - Decorations
 - Tickets
 - Wristbands
 - Raffle tickets
 - Flowers
 - Awards
 - T-shirts
- ◆ Identify target marketing groups
- ◆ Identify/contract ticket outlets
- ◆ Get information to University PR/Information Office

One Month in Advance

- ◆ Start promotion for event – announcements to media, teaser campaign
- ◆ Confirm housing and meals – retain confirmation numbers
- ◆ Arrange for performer payment with campus Accounts Payable office
- ◆ Review Technical Rider
- ◆ Arrange all Technical Considerations
 - Sound – microphones, tape decks/CD players, amps, speakers, cords, stands
 - Lights – bulbs, dimmers, wiring, gels
 - Staging – platforms, seating for audience, caution tape
 - Special needs – projectors, screens, recording equipment, musical instruments (piano will need to be tuned), music stands, lecterns, furniture (couch, side table, etc.), mats, access to water
- ◆ Meet with supervisor/tech director for space to ensure equipment is working and will meet performer needs
- ◆ Rent additional equipment
- ◆ Order food for event
 - Backstage refreshments
 - Meals for performer(s)
 - Meals/snacks for crews
 - Concessions
 - How many people do you expect to attend?
 - What can you afford?
 - Meet with campus catering to arrange food order
 - Complete appropriate forms
 - Seek donations if appropriate
 - Don't forget vegetarians
- ◆ Confirm security
- ◆ Arrange for parking
- ◆ Talk with campus media for advertising and coverage of event

- ◆ Contact other local media
- ◆ If open to public, contact other local schools, organizations, etc.
- ◆ Start determining staffing needs – be specific with duties and responsibilities
- ◆ Use committees – delegate responsibility and authority
 - PR Crew
 - Photographer
 - Ticket-takers
 - House Manager, ushers, box office
 - Concessions
 - Security
 - Load-In Crew/Grips
 - Load-Out Crew/Grips
 - Runners/Go-fers
 - Electrician
 - Sound Board
 - Spotlight Operators
 - Film Projectionists
 - Master/Mistress of Ceremonies
 - Welcome Committee, Guest Liaison(s)/Host(s)
 - Driver(s)
- ◆ Delegate creation of signage needed
 - “No photos/recording devices”
 - Directional signs
 - Sponsorship banners including board/committee banner
- ◆ Design Marketing Campaign/Publicity – vitally important!
- ◆ Complete Program Checklist Form

Three Weeks Before

- ◆ Distribute promotional materials/advertising
- ◆ Pick up supplies (obtain cash advance if necessary/able)
- ◆ Start ticket sales
- ◆ Finalize volunteer staff (you can not do it all!)
- ◆ Create access badges/passes and list of recipients

Two Weeks – One Week Before

- ◆ Second round of promo
- ◆ Word of mouth promotion campaign
- ◆ Pick up performer’s check – lock in safe place
- ◆ Confirm all details with agent
- ◆ Send performer information pack
- ◆ Make sure all board/committee members and volunteers will be attending the program
- ◆ Gather performer welcome pack materials

Day of Event

- ◆ Get there early - make sure supplies are ready to go
- ◆ Place signs and decorations
- ◆ Hand out flyers/handbills

- ◆ Everyone wear committee/board/event t-shirt if possible
- ◆ Make sure someone is at venue to greet guest if they are driving in on their own
- ◆ Make sure all appropriate persons are there for sound check (security, performer, tech crew), provide water/soda/juices if possible
- ◆ Make sure all volunteers are in place
- ◆ Don't forget check(s)
- ◆ Keep talking up the event
- ◆ Make sure performer is introduced at beginning and thanked at end of program
- ◆ Provide water for stage
- ◆ Keep event on schedule
- ◆ Make sure volunteers have breaks if they are working entire event (delegate this responsibility)
- ◆ Clean-up following performance
- ◆ Inventory equipment and assess damage for repairs and reordering (such as light bulbs)

Post-Event

- ◆ Return all rented or borrowed equipment
- ◆ Remove all advertising displays and posters
- ◆ Settle with all ticket outlets
- ◆ Turn in receipts
- ◆ Deposit cash
- ◆ Restock/order supplies if necessary
- ◆ Thank advisor, members, volunteers, etc. for job well done
- ◆ Send thank-you's to agent, performer along with photos and letter of recommendation if appropriate
- ◆ Clip and send reviews to agent or performer
- ◆ Jot down notes for file and future programs
 - Attendance, budget with receipts
 - Whether program met goals
 - Strengths, weaknesses
 - Personal and audience response to performer
 - Copies of thank-you's, reviews, evaluations
 - Recommendations for new procedures, additions to event checklist, etc.
- ◆ Complete program evaluation/summary form – ideally with input of committee and volunteers