

# Events Planning Handbook

## The Graduate School, Princeton University

**Topics** (click on topic to jump to section)

[Planning an Event](#)

[Registering an Event](#)

[Running an Event](#)

[Publicizing an Event](#)

[Alcoholic Beverage Policy](#)

[Noise Policy](#)

[Fundraising Guidelines](#)

### **Planning an Event**

Planning an event on campus begins with the group identifying goals, and then brainstorming about what activities might meet those goals. When initiating a program, keep the following questions in mind from the beginning:

- Who will sponsor the program? Will it be your group alone? Will you co-sponsor the program with an academic department or another group?
- How will the program be financed? Does your organization's budget contain enough funds, or will you need to solicit funding from other organizations or departments? Will the revenue from the program cover any costs?
- Where will the program be held? How many people do you expect? What size room do you need? Does the program fit the facility you'd like to use?
- Who is the intended audience for the program? Strictly students? The entire University community? Members of your organization or academic department?
- What University services will be needed to produce the program? Will you need food catered, maintenance, security, a sound system, printing, transportation?
- What type of publicity will be needed for this program? Who would be the audience most interested in your program? What segments of the campus or community would be attracted to your program?

### **Budgeting**

When planning any event, two primary questions must be asked: How much will the program cost? How will the program be funded? The answer to these questions begins with a budget.

Whether formulating a budget for a single program or a year's activities, remember that a budget is a written guideline for your plan of action. To be effective, a budget should reflect the knowledge gained in past ventures in the area of projecting expenditures, attendance at events, or unexpected costs. In essence, writing a budget requires planning, coordination and establishing a system of management controls for the administration of your organization.

The Graduate School has partnered with the Graduate Student Government and the Vice President for Campus Life to support the activities of graduate students and graduate student organizations through

the GSG Events Board. For information on how to apply for funding from the GSG Event board please visit the [GSG Events Board website](#). Funding may also be available through some academic departments, University offices and for events held at the Graduate College through the [Graduate College House Committee](#).

### **Facilities**

Determining where to produce a program often becomes a case of second-guessing the weather, competing with other organizations to get the same place on the same day, or, if you wait until the last minute, having to take whatever is left.

Due to the many activities on campus, getting the exact room, auditorium, or facility you need sometimes becomes difficult. One way to solve this problem is to plan early and reserve the space as soon as the program idea is set. In some cases, you may have to find out on what date(s) a facility is available before you can confirm your program plans. You will need to fill out an [Events Registration Form](#) at least three weeks in advance to reserve a facility. University Services maintains a list of [meeting and events facilities](#) that can be reserved for events. Student organizations can reserve space at [Campus Club](#). For set-up/clean-up services and equipment rentals please contact [Building Services](#) and media equipment rentals please contact [Instructional Support Services](#).

Keep in mind the following criteria when selecting space for your program:

- Fit the facility to the event/program - try to objectively and honestly project the number of people you expect to attend.
- What special requirements do you have? Will you need a stage, lighting, or sound system? Do you need to have food catered? If so, is there a kitchen or serving area in the facility?
- How long will the event/program last? Check with the appropriate scheduling office to make sure that you know the time limits, if any, of the building in which the program is to be held. Many times contractual obligations or the time needed for an event may exceed the time that the building is available. In this case, move up the starting time of the event or try to negotiate a later closing time. If you arrange for a later closing time, check to see if you will be charged for that extra time.
- What limitations are there on the facility? Find out prior to using the facility if there are any special restrictions or regulations.
- Will alcohol be served? University regulations require organizations to follow the [Alcoholic Beverage Policy](#) determined by the Graduate School. This policy includes making provisions for preventing underage drinking and hiring proctors Public Safety, as determined by the Graduate School.

### **Accessibility**

Student organizations are reminded that the University is bound by the Americans with Disabilities Act. As a part of Princeton University, student organizations must make every attempt to schedule events in locations accessible to persons with disabilities. Student organizations should find an accessible location on campus for **their** events. In specific cases where significant portions of the University community will be allowed to attend an event, the location is required to be accessible to persons with physical disabilities.

### **Event Policies and Guidelines**

Graduate students organizing any event are expected to follow all [University rules](#) and regulations in addition to policies set by the Graduate School. Please be sure to review rules and regulations before

planning an event and consult with the Office of Graduate Student Life on any questions you have regarding policies.

### **Contact**

For help with planning an event, contact [Dean Barkley](#).

## **How to Register an Event**

Any student or recognized student organization wishing to use University facilities or grounds for an event must submit an Events Registration Form to the Graduate School at least three weeks prior to the event. Dean Barkley's signature is required before any event will be considered approved.

Dean Barkley can provide advice with regard to appropriate spaces for a proposed event, costs which may be associated with the use of particular facilities, security and safety requirements, and equipment needs and costs. Recognized student organizations may use most University facilities for meetings and special events without charge for rent. (An exception to this policy is the use of Prospect House, which is not available for most student events.)

Occasionally, student organizations have sought the support of non-University organizations in sponsoring an event. It should be understood that in such situations student organizations wishing to maintain their status as a recognized organization must assume all the responsibilities associated with the event.

### **Events Registration Form**

You need to complete the online [Events Registration Form](#). The form should be submitted for Dean Barkley's signature at least three weeks before the event. Plan to provide a copy of the signed form to whomever is letting you use their space. In some cases, organizations may be required to provide a copy of the approved form to Building Services, Instructional Support Services or other involved University offices.

## **How to Run an Event**

Once the decisions on date, time, location and content have been made, file all appropriate registration forms with the Office of Graduate Student Life. Then, list the tasks to be accomplished and delegate them to committees or individuals.

The following checklist is designed to keep you from forgetting anything of vital importance to your event.

- **Publicity**
  - Who will design flyers? Invitations?
  - Place media ads or announcements.
  - Put up posters or flyers in designated posting areas.
  - Will there be any special gimmicks?
- **Financial**
  - Will money be collected or tickets sold?
  - What equipment is needed (cash box, change, stamp, etc.)?
  - Who will collect money or tickets?
  - What deposits, checks, payments are needed at event? In advance?
  - Arrange security for the cash box and deposit.

- **Security**
  - Is ID checking needed?
  - Will Public Safety coverage be required? How much does it cost?
  - Are proctors needed? Bartenders required?
  - Set up
  - Who will move furniture? Rearrange room? Unload cars? Carry equipment?
  - Who has a car?
  - Will you need extension cords? Extra power? Tables and chairs?
  - Will you need early access to the building or room?
- **Decorations**
  - Bring equipment to be used (tape, scissors, etc).
  - Will a ladder be needed? Is one available?
  - Are flowers to be delivered? Arranged?
  - Are planned decorations permitted in facility (balloons, flammable materials)?
  - Is additional lighting required? Tablecloths?
- **Refreshments**
  - Order food or obtain cash advance to purchase.
  - Obtain serving pieces (bowls, trays, etc).
  - Determine who will serve or replenish supplies at the event.
  - What dishes, cups, etc. will be needed for each person?
  - Decide who will clean and return any borrowed items.
- **Clean Up**
  - Who will clean up? Remove trash? Put furniture back in original location?
  - Talk with facility manager to understand exactly what is expected of your group.
  - Have a facility manager check the area before you leave.
- **Final Touches**
  - Be sure that clean up is completed.
  - Leave the area as you found it, including replacement of furniture.
  - Remove supplies, food and equipment used for the program.
  - Clean and return all rented or borrowed items.
  - Send thank you notes, if appropriate.
  - Complete all financial transactions - deposit moneys, pay bills, submit necessary forms.
  - Evaluate the event and be prepared to give an accurate report at the next meeting of your organization.

## **How to Publicize an Event**

### **Email Announcements**

If you would like to advertise an event to the graduate student body or the larger Princeton community, there are several e-mail distribution lists for reaching various segments of the University community.

- GS Events: A weekly list of events of interest to graduate students. Maintained by the [student life coordinator](#). In addition, graduate student organizations can [request](#) once per semester to have an email sent on their behalf to this list for a particular event.
- GSG-Global: Broadcasts information about events and activities cosponsored by the Graduate Student Government. Maintained by the [Graduate Student Government](#).
- Active E-list: Weekly list of University events open to all students (graduate and undergraduate). Events involving alcohol will not be included. Maintained by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students and the Undergraduate Student Government. E-mail announcements to [events@princeton.edu](mailto:events@princeton.edu); include day, time, location, sponsor/club, contact information, and a brief (less than 50 words) synopsis of the event.

- Student organizations may request to send an e-mail targeting specific segments of the graduate student community. Submit a request to Dean Barkley at least 2 weeks in advance.
- Recognized graduate student organizations may also maintain their own e-mail lists through OIT, to which students may voluntarily subscribe or unsubscribe. Such lists require Dean Barkley's approval; visit the [OIT website](#) for detailed information.

### **Posters, Flyers and Notices**

The organization name, a contact person and a telephone number should be included on all posters or notices displayed on campus. Posters or notices may be placed only on bulletin boards in dormitory entryways, Dining Service units, academic and administrative buildings, lampposts and outdoor kiosks. They may not be placed on walls, doors, trees, sculptures, etc. Chalking is not permitted on campus. Students should make arrangements to take down flyers after the event.

### **Frist Electronic Message Board**

Recognized graduate student organizations may publicize upcoming events on the [electronic message board](#) on the North Plaza outside the Frist Campus Center. Requests must be made on-line and are subject to approval by the Frist Campus Center. Events must first be registered with the Graduate School using the [Events Registration Form](#).

## **Alcoholic Beverage Policy**

Graduate students at Princeton University are expected to be acquainted with and to abide by both state and [University regulations](#) regarding the consumption of alcohol. They are also expected to be aware of the social, physiological and psychological consequences of excessive drinking in order to make responsible and informed decisions about the serving and consumption of alcohol. The University provides regular educational programs on alcohol and drug abuse, as well as counseling services.

The University alcoholic beverage policy is designed to be consistent with the laws of the State of New Jersey which, in general, prohibit the consumption and serving of alcoholic beverages by and to persons under 21 years of age. The policy also reflects the need for mutual respect and personal responsibility within a diverse community. Students are responsible for their behavior, whether or not they are under the influence of alcohol. Under no circumstances will the consumption of alcohol constitute a mitigating circumstance when it contributes to the violation of University regulations.

The University respects the right to privacy: its representatives will not enter dormitory rooms without substantive cause (i.e., without reasonable suspicion that University policies or regulations have been violated.) However, those individuals whose behavior infringes on the rights of others have, in essence, forfeited that privacy.

Alcoholic beverages will not normally be provided at University events where persons under the legal drinking age for consumption of alcoholic beverages are present. Those who are of legal drinking age and who wish to sponsor campus events with alcohol must comply with the guidelines established by the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School.

If given approval to serve alcoholic beverages, those organizing the event are responsible for ensuring that only those of legal drinking age are served. Availability of alcoholic beverages shall not be the primary focus of advertising for campus social events.

It is the primary responsibility of those in the presence of a severely intoxicated person to contact appropriate University or local medical or safety personnel (proctors, deans, McCosh Health Center Staff, Princeton Medical Center Staff, or local police or members of the rescue squad.) Intoxication will not be grounds for disciplinary action. Contacting the Department of Public Safety for assistance in transporting a student in need of medical attention will not, in itself, lead to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action will occur only if other circumstances indicating a violation of University policy are

observed. In such an instance, the fact that students initiated a call for assistance will be considered a mitigating circumstance.

### **Guidelines**

- The sponsoring organization must submit an Events Registration Form to Dean Barkley at least three weeks prior to the event.
- Functions which include the serving of alcoholic beverages should focus on activities and programs rather than on the consumption of alcohol. The advertising should reflect the purpose of the event, not the serving of alcohol.
- When alcoholic beverages are served at an event, non-alcoholic beverages (such as soft drinks or cider) should also be available and visible.
- Events at which alcoholic beverages are served should include the serving of food in visible, accessible areas; the quantity of salted foods, which result in thirst and additional drinking, should be limited.
- Students are strongly urged to discourage peers from drinking excessively. When drinking becomes excessive and may result in destructive behavior or behavior which may threaten the safety of the individual or of others, those responsible for the event should notify a proctor and be prepared to assist the individual to the infirmary or to his/her dormitory room or apartment.
- If the organization will charge for entry to the event or for alcoholic beverages, the New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control's "[Special Permit for Social Affairs](#)" must be filed with the Office of Graduate Student Life, 109 Clio Hall, and with the State Office in Trenton in a timely manner. State approval will come in the form of a license, which will permit the organization to charge for entry to the event or for alcoholic beverages. To meet state requirements, each attendee must provide proof of legal drinking age to an "ID checker" at the door and/or at the bar area.
- If persons under 21 years of age will be present at the event, alcohol will be served in a designated area (e.g., beer garden) where access and consumption can be restricted to persons of legal drinking age.
- The Assistant Dean for Student Life, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety and others, will determine what security/safety measures will be necessary (e.g., proctor, uniformed officer) for the event.
- Although permission is not required for students over 21 years of age to host private parties in their apartments, they are responsible for following all alcohol guidelines.

### **Noise Policy**

The Graduate School permits events to be registered on Sunday through Thursday evenings until midnight and until 2 am on Friday and Saturday evenings. This guideline is in place to ensure residents the right to a reasonably quiet environment in which to study and to pursue his or her other interests. If Public Safety receives a call concerning the noise level, Public Safety may ask you to lower your volume. If they are called twice, they will ask you to end your event.

### **Guidelines for Fundraising for Humanitarian Relief Efforts**

In an effort to assist student groups that wish to participate in fundraising relief efforts in response to natural disasters around the world or in support of other humanitarian efforts the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students and the Graduate School have developed the following guidelines:

- These efforts should be conducted under the auspices of a recognized student organization. Existing organizations are permitted to conduct these efforts as well as groups that wish to become recognized solely for this purpose.
- Donation by check should be strongly encouraged. Checks must be made out directly to the external relief agency (i.e., Red Cross, CARE). This method of donation is also useful for the donor as he/she has the record of a cancelled check, should it be desired, for tax purposes.
- Should an organization need to accept cash contributions, it should articulate procedures that ensure the security and proper accounting of the cash collected and review these procedures

with a member of the Student Life/Graduate School staff. Cash may not be deposited in a University account, but should be redeemed at a local bank for a cashier's check made out to the external relief organization.

- Funds may not be solicited from University departments, programs, organizations etc.
- Student organization funds may be used to advertise relief efforts or to provide information or other educational materials to members of the University community regarding relief and fundraising efforts or for other related University-based charges or costs. The amount of these expenditures should be modest in comparison to the amount raised directly for the relief effort.
- Donations may not be solicited through charges to a student's University account.
- Should recognized student organizations raising relief funds wish to set up tables, booths, etc., they should obtain permission from those persons in charge of the facility at which they wish to solicit and the Office of Student Life / Graduate School.