Event Planning Workshop

EVNT:3260:0002 Spr16
The University of Iowa
School of Journalism & Mass Communication

Instructor: Tracy Hufford

Location: 402 FH

Time: 3:30-4:45 p.m. Mondays & Wednesdays

Office Hours: 2:15 to 3:15 p.m. Mondays & 9:30-10:30 a.m. Thursdays and by appointment

Contact:
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*Email is the best way to reach me.

Course Overview:
Gain hands-on experience in event planning; working with clients, conceptualizing events, lining up small and large details, promoting events via social media and other means, carrying out events, and reflecting on outcomes; meet with event planning professionals; complete individual and group projects.

Prerequisite and requirements:
Students must be willing and able to put in time outside of class to carry out events.

Readings:
This course does not use a required text. Supplementary readings and resources will be posted to ICON.

Major Assignments:
Major assignment sheets are attached at the end of this syllabus. Each assignment will be discussed in more detail in a timely manner, but here is the gist:

• Attendance & Participation: Students will register their participation each class meeting by submitting to ICON a sample tweet featuring a highlight of the day. Tweets can include images or links. Up to one student each class period will earn an extra credit point and have their tweet published @UIEventPlanning. Students who must miss for an approved absence should upload the relevant documents to the ICON dropbox to receive credit. (32+ points)
• **Observation:** Each student will attend a medium or large-scale event. You will observe and report on successes and failures of the event. (40 points)

• **Dream Job Report:** Identify a person working in what you feel is a dream job in event planning. Interview that person and prepare a written report. (30 points)

• **Speaker preparation and response:** You will submit a bio and questions for each guest speaker by the start of the class period before their visit via ICON. (10 points each)

• **Team Event:** We will divide the class into teams. Each group will take the lead on planning and carrying out an event. I have made arrangements with entities willing to let our class be involved in their events and will connect you with your clients. You will be graded on the event’s success based on a written report you will complete as well as my observations and surveys to be completed by your classmates and clients. (100 points.)

• **Team Event Updates:** At four points throughout the semester (Weeks 5, 7, 11, & 14), teams will present plans and updates to the class. While not every member of the team will likely present each time, each member will submit via ICON a written update detailing tasks completed, tasks to do before the next update, and overall feedback about the team planning process. An unexcused absence on your team’s presentation day to your client is an automatic 5-point deduction. (10 points each = 30 points)

• **Final Reflection:** After your event is complete, it’s time to reflect on how it went. You will submit to ICON a 2-3-page description of the event from your perspective including a SWOT analysis and an analysis of your own performance. You will also complete surveys reviewing your teammates’ performances. You must complete the surveys to receive credit for your reflection. (20 points)

**Grading:**

99-100% A+  88-89% B+  78-79% C+  68-69% D+

94-98%   A    84-87% B   74-77% C   63-67% D

90-93%  A-  80-83% B-  70-73% C-  60-62% D-

**Attendance:**
I aim to make each meeting essential and meaningful, so please plan to attend every session or risk missing out on something important. You cannot be successful in this class if you are not consistently present and prepared. Out of respect for your classmates and our schedule, please also arrive on time and stay for the entire class period. Failing to do so will impact your grade.

Students who must miss class are accountable for all material presented and assignments given during their absence. It is your responsibility to communicate with me or your classmates to see what you need to know for the next session and to turn in any work that was due during the missed class period prior to the next meeting. In-class work may not be made up.

**Late Work & Early Work**
It’s essential that you meet deadlines with no exceptions. I will accept late work only in extreme circumstances, including an utterly debilitating illness or a documented family crisis. It is important that you communicate with me as soon as possible if you feel you will miss turning in an assignment and
provide adequate documentation to prove your given excuse. Any unexcused late work will lose 10% per
day and will be not be accepted more than 5 days late.

On the other hand, early work is accepted and celebrated in this course. Event planners must have an
excellent sense of what needs to be done when to maximize productivity and success. I’m giving you all
of the course assignment details now. If you wish to begin working on your assignments and turn them
in before the deadlines, be my guest. Please check in with me and let me know of your plans in case
there’s anything you need to know before you dig in.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Policies:

Administrative Home
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters
such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different
colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall or see the CLAS
Student Academic Handbook [www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml].

Academic Fraud
Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic
fraud. Academic fraud is a serious matter and is reported to the departmental DEO and to the Associate
Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum. Instructors and DEOs decide on appropriate
consequences at the departmental level while the Associate Dean enforces additional consequences at
the collegiate level. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

Making a Suggestion or Complaint
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and
then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the CLAS
Student Academic Handbook.

Accommodations for Disabilities
A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and
then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See
www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

Understanding Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students,
faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to
contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be
reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment at
www.uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/sexual-harassment-guide/index.html for assistance, definitions, and the
full University policy.
Reacting Safely to Severe Weather
In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. (Operations Manual, Part IV, 16. See items e, h, and i.)

Course Objectives

Students in this course will gain a broad understanding of the event-panning field, especially through the lenses of law & ethics, writing & storytelling, and multiculturalism.

Law & Ethics Learning Goal
Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in real space and cyberspace, and demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and their historical development.

- Students will demonstrate an ability to anticipate and recognize ethical issues when they arise and to reason through them taking multiple perspectives and contexts into account.
- Students will demonstrate an ability to explain their ethical approaches and reasoning about a particular dilemma in terms that can be understood by a diverse group of people.

Writing and Storytelling Learning Goal
Understand that clear, concise, correct writing is at the heart of journalistic expression and that reporting and communicating it effectively requires a knowledge and achievement of the highest, professionally-accepted standards in all work.

- Students will demonstrate the ability to gather factual story elements, and to evaluate and express them in logical, narrative forms for multiple media and audiences.
- Students will display the ability to access and analyze data, report facts accurately, research and edit information responsibly and in a manner commensurate with professional standards.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to apply above concepts in a manner that is sensitive to audiences across all media.

Multiculturalism Learning Goal
To demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups (including communities defined by gender,
race, ethnicity, age, religion and sexual orientation) in a global society in relationship to communications.

✓ Students will demonstrate an ability to produce media that serve the needs and interests of diverse communities and reflect their voices and experiences.

✓ Students will demonstrate sensitivity to and understanding of the cultures, histories, perspectives, and socio-economic and political situations of diverse groups.

✓ Students will demonstrate an ability to work with members of diverse groups to engage publicly over issues of community interest.
Schedule:

Week 1:
Wednesday, Jan. 20: Course and classmate intro. Primary assignment explanation and sign up.

Week 2:
Wednesday, Jan. 27: Client visit project presentation

Week 3:
Monday, Feb. 1: Discussion: Sponsorships and Event marketing, Doodle. Complete Doodle poll to see class availability for speaker panels.
Wednesday, Feb. 5: Work day.

Week 4:
Monday, Feb. 8: Team 1 & 2 presents to client. All teams: Written update 1 due.
Wednesday, Feb. 10: Team 3 presents plans to client. Team 4 present date TBD- client out of town.

Week 5:
Monday, Feb. 15: All Teams present plans to class for feedback. Discussion: Career Overview Assigned: Dream Job.
Wednesday, Feb. 17: Discussion: Design/Graphics and Green Events.

Week 6:
Monday, Feb. 22: Guest Speaker: Working with Clients
Wednesday, Feb. 24: Groups meet on their own for work day.

Week 7:
Monday, Feb. 29: Team 1 & 2 presents to client. All teams: Written update 2 due.
Wednesday, March 2: Teams 3 & 4 present plans to client.

Week 8:
Monday, March 7: Due: Observation assignment and presentations. Speaker panel prep.
Wednesday, March 9 or 10: Guest Speaker Panel: TBD- location and time for both classes to attend TBD based on Doodle poll results.
Week 9: **SPRING BREAK** March 14-20. Be safe and have fun!

Week 10:
Wednesday, March 23: Work day

Week 11:
Monday, March 28: Team 1 & 2 Update to client- in class. All teams; Written Update 3 due.
Wednesday, March 30: Team 3 & 4 Update to client- in class.

Week 12:
Monday, April 4: Guest Speaker: Dream job topic.
Wednesday, April 6: Due: Dream Job. Present Dream Job reports to class.

Week 13:
Monday, April 11: Dream Job Report presentations.
Wednesday, April 13: Discussion: Professionalism and landing a job. Guest speaker: Career Center

Week 14:
Monday, April 18: Discussion: Post event actions, SWOT analyses
Wednesday, April 20: Work day.

Week 15:
Monday, April 25: Prepare for mixer.
Wednesday, April 26 or 27: Event internship mixer. TBD via Doodle poll.

Week 16:
Monday, May 2: Post event discussion continued. End of course evaluations.
Wednesday, May 4: Teams present event reports to class and clients.

*Week 17: FINALS WEEK. We will not meet in class.*

{{PS: It’s important to be flexible! Please note that this is a tentative schedule. Unplanned opportunities and challenges may require changes. }}
We are lucky to have some interesting, successful event planners join us for in-depth conversations about their work. To help our guests know that we are engaged, and to make the most out of their visits, you should conduct a little research on each person and their work in advance.

Based on that research, please submit a bio and 3 questions for each guest speaker by the start of the class period before their visit via ICON.

I will likely browse through the posts and let our speakers know about the topics you would most like them to cover.

You should plan to ask one of your questions if there’s a lull or an appropriate time. There’s nothing I hate more than crickets when a speaker is willing to answer questions.

**Speaker dates:**

Feb. 22: Working with Clients

March 9 or 10: Speaker Panel TBD

April 4: Dream job

April 26 or 27: Event internship mixer

**Extra Credit Opportunity:** We will need a volunteer to send a thank you note to the guest speaker. This person will receive 2 points of extra credit for composing and sending this note. Please BCC me so that I will receive a copy of the thank you.
If you are a human being, chances are you’ve attended several events in your life that involved professional planning. However, unless something was particularly awful or terrific, you probably didn’t give much thought to the work that went into planning and carrying out these events. That is about to change.

Event planners attend events with their eyes open to detail. They notice choices that planners made from the way the event was promoted, how people flow through the event, the vendors the event utilizes, how the event is staffed, decorations, how the event engages participants, and more. They do this in order to store ideas of what to do and what not to do at their own events.

With this in mind, each student will attend a medium or large-scale event and observe it as an event planner. There should be at least 50 participants at your event.

I prefer that we have a wide variety of events to discuss, rather than 42 people all attending Brr Fest… To help make this possible, I’ve set up an ICON discussion board where you should post the name and date of the event you will attend. If more than 4 people have posted that they plan to attend an event, consider that event closed and choose another.

You will:
1) Attend the event to observe successes and failures of the event. Take copious notes and even photos if appropriate, so that you can give a vivid description of the event.
2) At the event, interview three attendees about their experiences.

You will organize your findings into a PowerPoint or Prezi and submit your presentation file and additional notes via ICON. You will be graded based on the file(s) you submit, not the in-class presentation, so be sure all of the information you want me to have is submitted to ICON!
Dream Job Report
Due April 6
30 Points

Our event planning field overview discussion introduced you to many career choices in event planning. Now is your chance to dig into the area of the field that most appeals to you and to make a professional contact in the process. This assignment has three steps:

1) Identify a person working in what you feel is a dream job in the event planning field.
2) Interview that person via email or over the phone about his or her work and how he or she came to be in such a great position.
3) Prepare a minimum 2-page written report about your interviewee and his or her fantastic job. Submit this to ICON by April 6.

Helpful Hint: Event planners are busy people. It would be wise for you to contact your top choice early and have a Plan B and even Plan C ready in case you don’t hear back in a timely manner. Your deadline is firm.
Group Event Assignment
150 Points

Each member of our course will also be a member of a smaller team. Each team will be responsible for carrying out one major event.

You will collaborate on the overall event, but each team member will have individual responsibilities and will meet individual requirements and milestones for points along the way. Each teammate will receive an individual grade. It is in your best interest to put forth your best effort and support your teammates.

Milestones and Points breakdown:

30: Written Updates and In-Class Presentations

At three points throughout the semester teams will present plans and updates to the class. While not every member of the team will likely present each time, each member will submit via ICON a 1-2 page written update detailing tasks completed, tasks to do before the next update, and overall feedback about the team planning process. (10 points each = 30 points). While your grade is based on your written report, an unexcused absence on a client presentation day is an automatic 5-point deduction.

100 points: Event Execution

It’s the big moment! You will be graded based on your ability to work successfully with your team and to please your client as well as the professional, organized manner in which I observe you completing your work leading up to the event, during the event, and post event. Your teammates and clients will complete surveys to help me fill in details and determine an appropriate grade. It is in your best interest to be an excellent team mate who is engaged and helpful throughout the semester.

10 Points: Final Reflection

Due within 72 hours of your event, please submit to ICON a 2-3 page reflection that includes a SWOT (Successes, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis as discussed in class and answering the following questions:

1. How did this project go from your perspective?
2. What tasks did you complete for your team?
3. What did you gain from the assignment?
4. What would you change about your participation?
5. How would you improve the event if you could do it over again or without specific constraints?
6. What else would you like to share?
Day 1 Survey

Name & Pronunciation:

Email:

Major:

Hometown:

Is there anything you’d like me to know about you?

Circle your preferred team event:

Team 1: Engaging in Global Health Workshop on Thursday, April 7 - Saturday April 9

Team 2: Iowa Football Club Fundraisers on Saturday, March 5 and Saturday April 22

Team 3: CIVIC 5K Fundraiser on Saturday, April 23 or 30 - TBD

Team 4: C. Lillig Memorial Cup on Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1
1) Is there any reason why you absolutely CAN NOT do any of these events?

2) Is there any reason why you would particularly love to do your top choice?
   If too many students pick the same event choice you may not get your top pick. Please rank the
   remaining 3 events in order of your choice- starting with your next top pick.

   1) 

   2) 

   3) 

3) What special skills and areas of expertise do you bring to your team?

4) Are you interested in being a team leader? What do you think would make you a good choice for
   this role?

5) Are there other roles that you’re really hoping to tackle? Why?