Foundations of Event Management

EVNT: 3154:0001
The University of Iowa
School of Journalism & Mass Communication

Instructor: Tracy Hufford

Location: AJB E205

Time: 3:30-4:45 p.m. Monday and Wednesday

Student Drop In Hours: 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Monday and Wednesdays and by appointment

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E 346B Adler Journalism Building
319-335-3482- office
*Email is the best way to reach me

Course Overview:
Event planning is a growing, changing industry that allows professionals to employ their communication, marketing, social media, and project management skills. In this course we will explore the event-planning field through speakers, research, and hands-on experiences.

Prerequisite and requirements:
Students must be willing and able to put in time outside of class to volunteer at an event and visit an event site. It may be necessary to travel off campus or out of Iowa City to complete these tasks.

Text:
There is no 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: I will administer at least 6 unannounced attendance quizzes throughout the semester at 10 points each. (60+ points)
- Class Project Participation: We will plan a real-world event as a class. There will be action steps that need to be taken outside of class. Students can earn up to 25 extra points by volunteering to take on one of these tasks and successfully completing it. You will document your completion by submitting a description of your task and any relevant
tangibles to the ICON assignment. You are also responsible for sharing any tangibles and updates with our event.

- **Current Event Daily Reports:** Students can share highlights of any event they have attended or monitor BizBash Daily, an e-newsletter from an industry leader, and present a recap their assigned day. (10 points)

- **Speaker preparation and response:** You will submit a 3 paragraph bio and 3 questions for each guest speaker by the start of the class period before their visit via ICON. (5 points each)

- **Venue Visit:** Students will work in teams of 2-3 and arrange to visit an event venue to tour the space and speak with an event planner about the venue and their job. You will take notes and photos during your visit and present your findings as a team in a visually-appealing PowerPoint or Prezi. (50 points)

- **Event Volunteering Experience:** Each student will volunteer at a medium or large-scale event. You will observe and report on successes and failures of the event along with your role and the event’s overall organization. You will describe your experience in a visually-appealing PowerPoint or Prezi. (75 points)

- **Final Event Plan:** You will identify a client in any sector you choose, communicate with the client about their event planning needs or interests, and produce a plan for an event that the client could choose to carry out. (125 points)

**Grading:**

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

- 94-99% A  
  84-87% B  
  74-77% C  
  63-67% D

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

**Attendance and Participation:**

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.

**Participation**

In-class contribution is a significant part of your grade and an important part of our shared learning experience. Your active participation helps me to evaluate your overall performance. You can excel in this area if you come to class on time and contribute to the course by:

- Providing strong evidence of having thought through the material.
- Advancing the discussion by contributing insightful comments and questions.
- Listening attentively in class.
- Demonstrating interest in your peers’ comments, questions, and presentations.
- Giving constructive feedback to your peers when appropriate.
Late Work & Early Work
As budding event planners, 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.

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.

Technology in the classroom
Technology and electronic devices are prohibited from being used in our classroom unless we are actively using them in class that day.

Professionalism: Professionalism is key in event planning and is key in building a positive relationship with your client. I reserve the right to lower your final grade by up to 5 percent for each instance of unprofessional behavior. Examples of unprofessional behavior include showing up for client presentations in sweatpants, disrespectful communication with your client or teammates, arriving late or leaving class early without good cause, talking or using your electronics during class discussions, etc.

Administrative Home
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the administrative home of this course and governs its add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other policies. These policies vary by college (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook).

Electronic Communication
Students are responsible for official correspondences sent to their UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for all communication within UI (Operations Manual, III.15.2).

Accommodations for Disabilities
UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related condition) by registering with Student Disability Services (SDS). The student should then discuss accommodations with the course instructor (https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/).

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
UI is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against
individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other
identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information,
contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity
at diversity@uiowa.edu or diversity.uiowa.edu.

Absences and Attendance
Students are responsible for attending class and for contributing to the learning environment of a course. Students are also responsible for knowing their course absence policies, which will vary by instructor. All absence policies, however, must uphold the UI policy related to student illness, mandatory religious obligations, including Holy Day obligations, unavoidable circumstances, or University authorized activities (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-absences). Students may use this absence form to aid communication; the instructor will decide if the absence is excused or unexcused (https://clas.uiowa.edu/sites/default/files/ABSENCE%20EXPLANATION%20FORM2019.pdf).

Academic Integrity
All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College’s Code of Academic Honesty. Misconduct is reported to the College, resulting in suspension or other sanctions, with sanctions communicated with the student through the UI email address (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code).

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Administrative Home of the Course
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Communication and the Required Use of UI Email
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Complaints
Students with a complaint about an academic issue should first visit with the instructor or course
supervisor and then with the Chair of the department or program offering the course; students may next bring the issue to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. For more information, see https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities.

**Final Examination Policies**

The final exam schedule is announced around the fifth week of classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and place of a final exam. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this information. No exams of any kind are allowed the week before finals. Visit https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies.

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**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 must uphold the UI mission and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment must be reported immediately. For assistance, please see https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/.
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.
Class Schedule:

Week 1:
Monday, August 26: Course and classmate introductions. Primary assignment explanations and sign up. Class project/clients introduced.
Wednesday, August 28: Client Visit – Rosemary Schwartz, Elder Services

Week 2:
Monday, Sept. 2: Labor Day No Class
Wednesday, Sept. 4: Discussion: Event Planning Qualifications, Field Overview, and Job Outlook, Event Planning 101.
DUE: Venue Visit signup via Google Doc sign up.

Week 3:
Monday, Sept. 9: Discussion: Vendors & Catering
Wednesday, Sept. 11: Discussion: Date selection, Venues, and Contracts.

Week 4:
Monday, Sept. 16: **FIELD TRIP: IMU** Meet in Iowa Theatre, Jonna Eiffert, Catering IMU
Assignment reminder: Venue Visit
Wednesday, Sept. 18: DUE: Event Volunteering signup via ICON discussion board.
Discussion: Event timelines and Budgets
Friday, Sept. 20: Event Management Certificate Field Trip to Minneapolis

Week 5:

Week 6:
Monday, Sept. 30: Discussion: Client visit- Rosemary Schwartz
Wednesday, Oct. 2: Speaker: Connie Goldsmith- Décor, Design & Catering
: 3:30-5:00 p.m.- Event Planning Internship Fair- AJB Rotunda

Week 7:
Monday, Oct.7 : Discussion: Marketing & Social Media
Wednesday, Oct. 9: Discussion: Technology

Week 8:
Monday, Oct. 14: Due: Final Event Plan description and client interview
Wednesday, Oct. 16: Guest speaker: Chuck Long and Angie Peterson- Sport Event Planning
Assignment Reminder: Event Volunteering Experience
Week 9:
Wednesday, Oct. 23: Discussion: Nonprofit Event Planning & Fundraising.

Week 10:
Wednesday, Oct. 30: Event Volunteering Experience presentations.

Week 11:
Monday, Nov. 4: Discussion: Crisis Management and Legal/Ethical Elements. Conferences sign up.
Wednesday, Nov. 6: Guest speaker: Sara Maples- U of I Sustainability

Week 12:
Monday, Nov. 11: Individual Conferences.
Wednesday, Nov. 13: Individual Conferences.

Week 13:
Monday, Nov. 18:
Wednesday, Nov. 20:

Week of Nov. 25: THANKSGIVING BREAK - Have fun and be safe

Week 14:
Monday, Dec. 2 Guest Speaker: Amanda Burrell -Wedding Planning Assignment reminder: Final Event Plan
Wednesday, Dec. 4: Discussion: Measuring Success and Post-Event Steps. End of course evaluations.

Week 15:
Wednesday, Dec. 11: Final Event Plan presentations.

Dec. 16: Finals Week We will not meet and we do not have a final.

{{PS: It’s important to be flexible! Please note that this is a tentative schedule. Unplanned opportunities and challenges may require changes}}
A successful event planner is innovative, on top of industry trends, and keeps an eye on the “competition.” To get you in the habit, I’m asking each student to sign up for BizBash Daily, a daily e-newsletter from a leading source of inspiration in the events industry. You’ll find a link at www.bizbash.com.

You each will be responsible for monitoring the newsletter for one week and will present one highlight to the class on your assigned day. A highlight can be something that you found inspiring, surprising, or even an example of something you didn’t like.

If you would rather, in lieu of using an event from BizBash, you may present about an event that you have attended. This event can be anything ranging from a wedding, birthday party, Greek event, CAB event, private events etc. You would need to provide some photos or visuals and tell us about the event. What was the event like- tell us about décor, food, activities, the venue or anything else you might want to share.

Your presentation should be brief (less than 5 minutes) and informal, but you should plan to pull up a visual to help foster understanding and discussion. You will also be prepared with at least one discussion point regarding your topic of choice.

Current event discussions will generally be at the start of our class period, so please plan to arrive a few minutes early on your day to set up.

There is a sign up (Google doc) for the class date that you wish to present your event report under the discussions tab (2-3 students/class period). If you need to switch your date, please do so on our class Google document.
Class Project participation
25 points

We will put course concepts into practice by planning and pulling off an actual event as a class. To do so will require several action steps outside of class. Students will sign up to take responsibility for an action step. You will submit the results/evidence of your work to the ICON assignment page to earn up to 25 points. Students will be responsible for meeting individual deadlines on these action steps. Failure to complete your action step in a timely, thorough, or professional manner will result in a lower grade.

Event:

Client:
Speaker Preparation  
5 points each

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 to ICON a 3+ paragraph summary of the speaker’s bio and pertinent details about their occupation/place of work along with at least 3 questions you’d like to ask the speakers.

I will likely browse through the submissions 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 Preparations are due by the start of the class period before the speaker's visit. Example: If the speaker is coming on a Thursday, the assignment is due by class time Tuesday of that week.

**Speaker dates:**

**Connie Goldsmith- Avacentre- Solon**

**Angie Peterson, Children’s Therapy Center, Chuck Long, Iowa Sports Foundation**

**Jil Dasher, Iowa City  HPN Global**

**Amanda Burrell, White Ivy Events, Iowa City**

**Sara Maples, Office of Sustainability**
Venue Visit Assignment  
Due Sept. 23  
50 Points

At the start of our course, you should have signed up to visit one of several local venues in teams of 3 or opted to go solo and visit a venue in your hometown. You may also choose to go to the venue that you plan on using for your Final Event Plan! You must sign up for a venue by Sept. 4 on our class google doc, found under this assignment’s ICON tab.

**Step 1:** Contact the venue to schedule a visit. Depending on the type of venue you chose, you might reach out to a catering manager, event supervisor, etc. Please note: there will be no extensions or venue switches allowed for this assignment unless you let me know by the end of Week 2 of our course that there is a scheduling problem with your assigned venue.

**Step 2:** Tour the venue to learn about how it plans and executes its events.

**This is the information you need to seek out:**

Types of events the venue hosts  
Examples of annual or typical events  
Examples of outliers or unusual events  
How are events planned at the venue- DETAILS:  
What do guests planning events at this venue need to know:

- setup, tear down, steps to book the venue, who can cater there, rental prices of facility, chairs, tables and other venue items, other venue fees, rental contract, policies/rules, and who is your contact at the venue.

**Ask for:**  
copies of contracts  
checklists  
any other pertinent documents related to events in the venue.

**Ask about the person giving you the tour**  
what is his or her title  
what are his or her responsibilities  
What does he or she like and dislike about the job

**Ask your own questions as well. What do you want to know?**

**Step 3:** Take photos on your tour and locate supplementary visuals online or through your host.
**Step 4:** Organize your findings into a PowerPoint or Prezi and submit your presentation file and additional notes via ICON. As time permits, all students will share their presentations with the class on Sept. 23 and 25.

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**Event Volunteering Experience**  
**Due October 28**  
**75 Points**

**Step 1:** Identify an event you would like to volunteer at. To qualify, the event should draw at least 50 people (or ask the instructor for special permission for smaller events). You can find events by searching community and university calendars.

**Step 2:** Post to the ICON discussion board by Sept. 18 the event you plan to volunteer with. If more than 4 other students have already posted about your event, you need to choose a different one.

**Step 3:** Be in touch with event organizers letting them know you would like to volunteer. Follow their instructions for how to carry out that goal. You should dedicate some time in advance of the event for planning (if possible) and at least 3 hours carrying out the event.

**Step 4:** As you are completing your volunteering duties, take notes on the following:

- How the event is organized. Who is in charge? How did this event come to be?
- How do event managers communicate with volunteers?
- How do guests learn the details they need to know?

What choices do you see the event managers making:

- Venue – why was this venue selected?
- Vendors- who was there and why were they selected?
- Décor- what was the theme or decorations at the event?
- Marketing –How was the event promoted?
- Technology- What was used at the event?
- Activities- What was there to do at the event? Why did they choose the activities they did?

How are guests responding to the event? Interview a few guests and get their reaction.  
How are event managers handling the stresses of carrying out an event?  
What recommendations would you make for improving the event in the future?

**Step 5:** Take photos of the event and gather supplementary photos online.

**Step 6:** Organize your findings into a PowerPoint, Canva, or Prezi and submit your presentation file and additional notes via ICON. As time permits, all students will share their presentations with the class on Oct. 28 and Oct. 30.
Final Event Plan
Due Dec. 9
125 Points

Throughout the semester we’ve been talking about the elements of an event plan and planning a hypothetical event as a group. This is your chance to call all the shots! Identify a client in any sector you choose, communicate with the client about their event planning needs or interests, and produce a plan for an event that the client could choose to carry out. As time permits, students will present their plans to the class on Dec. 9 and Dec. 11.

Due: Oct. 14: You will turn in a one page Word document with a description of the event you have chosen to plan, your client’s name and bio, event goals and objectives.

Grading:
You will be graded based on incorporation of course content and ideas, professionalism, attention to detail, evidence of research, potential for event plans to be implemented, as well as spelling, grammar, and organization.

Client & Event Parameters:
1) You might be currently affiliated with the client— but no planning an event that the organization has already organized or has done in the past. Your client may not be another student, as this is to be a professional experience.
2) The event you plan should require in-depth thinking and research to allow you to gain meaningful experience. Choose an event of appropriate scope. A brownbag lunch for 10 people is too simple. A week-long international conference with 10 locations is too complicated.
3) This should be a new event, not a revamping of an existing event.

Details:
Your ICON submission should be in one Word document and a Powerpoint/Prezi/Canva with an embedded spreadsheet and links to external components on Trello and Pinterest. Be sure your settings allow me to access your work, or, if you’d rather, invite me to join your boards privately. Please also include screenshots of your boards as a backup method to provide me access to your work. This written report should be specific, in depth and a go-to document to actually make this event happen. It should include:

1) Background information on the client.
2) Notes/bullet points from your client interview about event goals and preferences.
3) Information about competitors’ events or similar events.
4) Specific event plans including:
   a. Venue
      i. A description of where the event should take place and why.
         1. Contact information for venue representatives (who has the keys?)
         2. Details for guests about parking, restrooms, whatever else they’ll need to know.
      ii. Two alternative sites in case your client prefers other options.
iii. If you’re planning an outdoor event, a back-up plan for inclement weather.

b. Guests
   i. Who is the target audience for this event?
   ii. How many people are you planning for and how did you arrive at that number?

c. Vendors
   i. Who will provide food, decorations, staffing, entertainment, etc.?
   ii. What specifics can you share with each vendor?
      1. Proposed menu.
      2. Decoration vision.
      3. Space set up.
      4. Staffing needs/tasks.

d. Activities (PINTEREST, TRELLO)
   i. What will happen at your event?
   ii. What is your proposed schedule of activities at the event?

e. Estimated costs (GOOGLE DOC or Excel spreadsheet embedded into your Word Doc, please).
   i. This should be as detailed and accurate as possible.
   ii. Include options for shaving costs whenever possible, to allow flexibility.

f. Your plans for promoting the event.
   i. How will you reach out to potential guests?
   ii. How will you collect RSVP information (if relevant)?

g. Social Media component
   i. What role will social media play leading up to your event?
   ii. How will social media be incorporated in your event?
   iii. Post-event?

h. Sustainability details.
   i. What will be the environmental impact of the event?
   ii. What ideas do you have to minimize that impact?

i. Crisis Management
   i. What crises can you anticipate?
   ii. How will you prepare to prevent and face these anticipated crises?

j. Plans for measuring the event’s success.

k. A timeline with task list for implementing the event. (TRELLO)

l. Any other details pertinent to your specific event.

External Components:

1) Trello: Please provide links to two Trello boards.
   a. Detailed task list for planning the event.
   b. Detailed task list for the day of the event.
   c. To ensure that I can see your board, please set it to public, invite me to join the board, AND attach to your assignment submission a screen shot of your boards.

2) Pinterest: Please create a vision board to gather ideas and specific examples. If you do not wish to make your board public, you must invite me to join the board. Please also submit a screenshot of the board with your assignment.
   a. Venue
   b. Menu
c. Décor  
d. Entertainment  
e. Activities  
f. Etc.

Day 1 Survey

Name:

How is your name pronounced?

Preferred pronouns: (examples: she, her, hers; he, him, his; they, them, theirs) etc.

Major:

Have you signed up to earn or are you planning to earn your Certificate in Event Planning?

Hometown:

Hobbies:

Reasons for taking this course:

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