Instructor: Emily McMahon  
The University of Iowa  
School of Journalism & Mass Communication  

Location: 140 BHC  

Time: 5:00 PM - 6:15 PM Tuesdays & Thursdays  

Office Hours: *Please make an appointment if planning to attend office hours*  
6:15 PM - 7:15 PM Mondays, Wednesdays  
Office hours location will be at Sculpt 105 E College Street Iowa City, IA 52317  

Contact:  
emily-m-mcmahon@uiowa.edu  
Email is the best way to reach me. Please give me 24 hours response time on the weekdays, and until end of day Monday if you email over the weekend.  
For emergencies & time sensitive issues, my cell is listed on my website www.soireeia.com  

Course Overview:  
Typically, when people think of private events they just think of parties and celebrations; receptions, dinners, birthdays, bar/bat mitzvahs, weddings, and anniversaries. Yet, technically, a private event just means one that is aimed at a specific audience of invited guests, i.e. not open to everyone. Therefore, within the private events category of special events, there are also several sub-categories. We will be working with clients, conceptualizing events, researching, lining up small and large details, carrying out events, and reflecting on outcomes. Meet with event planning professionals and 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.  

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-  

Course Policies:
**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 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.

**Technology in Class:**
It is the policy of the department of Event Management to keep cell phones, laptops, and most other tech devices securely in your bags during class. Pen and paper are widely encouraged as studies show you will retain more information if you take handwritten notes. While there are some times that we will use our cell phones or laptops during class time, most of the time we will not.

**Professionalism:**
Professionalism is key in event planning and is key in building a positive relationship with your client. Students are expected to behave in a professional manner in the classroom and when representing the class in any way. This includes using proper email etiquette, arriving on time, being respectful and attentive, and more. 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 misusing in-class work time, showing up for client presentations in unprofessional attire (like 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.

**Late Work & Early Work**
It’s essential that you meet deadlines with no exceptions. I will accept late work only in extreme circumstances. 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 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. 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.

**Workload & In-class work time**
The UI College of Liberal Arts guidelines state that each semester hour of class time should entail around two hours per week of outside homework and class preparation for the average student. For example, in our 3 semester hour course, students should expect (on average) 6 additional hours of outside work per week or a total of around 9 hours per course per week if classroom time is included.
Although spending time outside of class is expected and important, we will reserve time in class for working on your project and major assignments. Students are expected to make the most of this time and come prepared to be productive.

Collaboration
Like event planning in the professional world, a lot of what you’ll do in our class is collaborative. You will have a chance to describe your individual efforts as well as reflect on your teammates’ efforts throughout the semester. Each student should contribute an equal amount to group projects. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade. Misrepresenting your efforts and allowing others to do the work while you take credit is considered academic fraud and could be reported to CLAS. It is your responsibility to be in touch if you have any questions or concerns about collaboration.

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 Academic Policies Handbook at [https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook](https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook).

Electronic Communication
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences ([Operations Manual, III.15.2](https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/)).

Accommodations for Disabilities
The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which includes but is not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make particular arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See [https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/](https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/) for information.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
The University of Iowa 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, diversity@uiowa.edu, or visit diversity.uiowa.edu.
**Academic Honesty**
All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's [Code of Academic Honesty](#): "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the [IOWA Challenge](#). I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled ([CLAS Academic Policies Handbook](#)).

**CLAS Final Examination Policies**
The final examination schedule for each class is announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar’s website and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a final exam.

**Making a Suggestion or a Complaint**
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident ([CLAS Academic Policies Handbook](#)).

**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 [Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator](#) 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. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the [Department of Public Safety](#) website.
Course Objectives
Students in this course will gain a broad understanding of the event-planning 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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Agenda</th>
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</table>
| 8/21/2018  | First Day of class!  
Course & classmate introductions  
Major assignments explained |
| 8/23/2018  | Event Proposals Template & Planning Overview  
Review Birthday Party Assignment  
Professionalism & Working with Clients Discussion |
| 8/28/2018  | Clients Visit: Birthday Parties |
| 8/30/2018  | -- Work Day -- We will not be meeting in class. |
| 9/4/2018   | Venue Selection  
Event Timelines (whole process to day-of)  
Review of Event Proposals Template |
| 9/6/2018   | The Rules of Tables, Chairs, and Set Ups  
Layouts 101 - AllSeated |
| 9/11/2018  | **Guest Speaker:** Travis Newell of Unique Events |
| 9/13/2018  | Birthday Party Event Proposal Drafts & Presentations |
| 9/18/2018  | Final Birthday Party Event Proposals Due  
**Guest Speaker:** Amanda Young of Memories in the Making Events |
| 9/20/2018  | “You’re the Event Planner” Written Updates due & In-Class Presentations |
| 9/25/2018  | Assignment Due: Weddings 101 Presentations |
| 9/27/2018  | Weddings 101 Presentations Continued  
*Internship Job Fair in AJB Rotunda 3:30 - 5 pm  
(2 points of extra credit is available to those who attend the Internship fair and write a 1 page paper on who you were able to talk to and what you learned.) |
| 10/2/2018  | **Guest Speaker:** Seth Friedman & Heather Friedman on Private Fundraisers & Other Events |
| 10/4/2018  | TBD |
| *10/5 at 8 am - 10/6 at 3 pm | *Event Management Certificate Field Trip to Des Moines  
Attendance is encouraged but not required |
**Week 9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/9/2018</td>
<td>PPP Self Evaluations Due</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Guest Speaker:</strong> Allison Strimel and Erin McMeen of BreadGarden</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Catering</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/11/2018</td>
<td>-- Work Day -- We WILL be meeting in class.</td>
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**Week 10**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/16/2018</td>
<td><strong>Guest Speaker:</strong> Adam Kopfman, Tip Top Cakes; talking about</td>
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<tr>
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<td>LGBTQ+ Weddings and his experiences in the baking industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/18/2018</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/23/2018</td>
<td>“You’re the Event Planner” Written Updates due &amp; In-Class Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/25/2018</td>
<td>-- Work Day -- We will not be meeting in class.</td>
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**Week 11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/30/2018</td>
<td>Topics in Private Events Presentation &amp; Discussion: South Asian Weddings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/1/2018</td>
<td>Topics in Private Events Presentation &amp; Discussion: LGBTQ+ Weddings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/6/2018</td>
<td>Topics in Private Events Presentation &amp; Discussion: Bar/Bat/B’nai Mitzvahs</td>
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**Week 12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*11/7/2018</td>
<td>*Panel Discussion: Under the Hood of NewBo Evolve</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30-4:45 pm</td>
<td>Old Capitol Senate Chamber</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attendance is encouraged but not required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/8/2018</td>
<td>Topics in Private Events Presentation &amp; Discussion: Charity / Non-Profit Private Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/13/2018</td>
<td>Topics in Private Events Presentation &amp; Discussion: Brand Communication Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*11/15 12 noon - 1 pm</td>
<td>*IFEA Webinar with ThinkIowaCity.com: “Membership Clubs—Upgraded Event Experiences to Boost Your Budget”</td>
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<td>UCC 1117</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attendance is encouraged but not required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/15/2018</td>
<td>Topics in Private Events Presentation &amp; Discussion: Quinceañeras</td>
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**Week 13**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/20/2018</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break - No Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/22/2018</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break - No Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/27/2018</td>
<td>-- Work Day to prep for your Final Presentations -- We WILL be meeting in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/29/2018</td>
<td>“You’re the Event Planner” Final Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/4/2018</td>
<td>“You’re the Event Planner” Final Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course Evaluations</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/6/2018</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 17</td>
<td>We are <strong>not</strong> having a final!</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Some days we have work days or TBD listed on our schedule. Based on the progress of the class and your overall understanding of the materials, we may change our learning focus during particular weeks. Event planners have to be flexible. We may stray from this plan due to unforeseen opportunities or challenges. Please review this document online through Google Docs often for the most up-to-date version.
Major Assignments Explanations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Birthday Party Event Proposal Document</strong></td>
<td>Drafts: 9/13, Final: 9/18</td>
<td>We are lucky enough to get to work with a handful of parents who are planning their child’s birthday party. We will be meeting with them on August 28, 2018 to learn more about their goals for the birthday party and for you to ask questions. Your assignment is to, individually, prepare an Event Proposal that includes all of the required elements in our template. Your document will be different than someone else’s document who met with the same client. Creativity, photos, pricing, booking information, and details are all must-haves for this assignment. If you are recommending a venue, is it available for the client’s preferred dates? Where do they go to purchase those party favors? Is everything in budget? Your recommendations must fit within the client’s budget and must be a realistic plan for the client to turn around and execute. Let’s not make this an example of the Netflix show “Nailed It”. We will be sharing our Event Proposal drafts to each other during class on September 13, 2018 for feedback and updates. The final draft of this assignment is due in ICON on September 18, 2018 at the start of class. I will send the final event proposals to your client for them to execute.</td>
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</table>
| **Weddings 101**           | Due: 9/25 | On the first day of class everyone will be randomly assigned a topic related to weddings. Using your best research skills and the search engine of your choice, learn all you can about your topic. If you cannot find sufficient information online, use other sources such as interviewing an expert in the industry. Narrow down all of your research to the most important things that every wedding planner should know about your topic. Present your findings in a Powerpoint/Slides presentation to everyone in class in 9 minutes or less. I’ll be using a timer, so make sure you can get all the information shared on time. Your last slide of your presentation must correctly cite all your sources. 
Topics Include:  
- Engagement Rings, Wedding Bands, and Jewelry  
- Stationery  
- DJs / Bands / Music Selection  
- Wedding Photography  
- Wedding Videography/Cinematography |
| Topics in Private Events: | Due: varies 10/30 - 11/15 | At the start of the semester, we will divide into small groups who will work together to research these types of events and then prepare a presentation that we will review together during one class session.

The most important part of this assignment is not to research and share advice from the client’s viewpoint or the viewpoint of a guest. You’re teaching the rest of the class on how to organize one of these events as the event planner. There is a big difference, so make sure your presentation is distinct in that way.

This semester, these topics will be:
- South Asian Weddings
- LGBTQ+ Weddings
- Bar/Bat/B’nai Mitzvahs |

| Wedding Flowers & Working with a Florist | Dresses / Alterations / Bustles | Hotel Wedding Room Blocks |
| Wedding Suits / Tuxes and Rental Process | The different roles at a wedding and what those roles do |
| Catering / Food / Dinner | Wedding Cake & Desserts |
| Rentals & Decorations | American Wedding Ceremony Traditions & Procedures |
| American Wedding Reception Traditions and Procedures |

You will be graded on the information shared during your presentation, so be sure you are sharing a much information as you can. An “A+” assignment is someone who arrives prepared, makes great use of the time allotted to present, has a great research to share, has technically correct information, and has an engaging presentation.

| PPP Self Evaluations | 15 points | Have you been participating in class? Beyond being physically present, are you actively engaged in our work? Have you acted professionally with your clients? Is that reflected in your homework? Your presence, participation, and professionalism are essential to your success in our classroom and essential to your success as an event planner. These are the types of things you should be thinking about as you write this paper, but do not simply answer these example questions. Use your own analysis of your behavior to complete this assignment. Your reflection should be brief—one page should suffice—and include the number of points out of 15 you think you deserve for your efforts to date. |
- Charity / Non-Profit Private Events
- Brand Communication Events
- Quinceañeras

**Part 1:**
As a group, you'll prepare a PowerPoint / Google Slides / Prezi that includes:

- Overview of event type. (5%)
- Specifics - what makes this event special? (10%)
- Traditions and History Explained (5%)
- Dos and Don'ts at this type of event related to event planning etiquette (20%)
- Pinterest board (minimum 250 pins). Show us your pins! (10%)
- Video clips from movies, tv shows, online sources relevant to your event. (10%)
- If you were designing an event like this - what are 15-20 things you’d have to incorporate? What are your event ideas? (25%)
- Your last slide(s) should professionally cite your sources used to complete all your research. (5%)

Your presentation should not use only websites as sources. I expect a minimum of 3 different mediums of resources such as books, interviews, magazines, encyclopedias, photos, film, tv, or radio. Additionally, I expect your presentation to take the entire class period, so be sure the amount of content you’re presenting is robust enough to do so.

**Part 2:**
As individuals, you’ll pretend that you are planning your own event for a client. Tell us what your pretend client’s goals are for their own event and how you will accomplish those goals. Please write a full event proposal following our template. Due in ICON at the beginning of the class during your presentation day.

### Speaker Preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 points each</th>
<th>Due: 11:59 pm on the day prior to that class</th>
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We are lucky to have some successful event planners and other professionals join us for in-depth conversations about their areas of expertise. 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 biography (or work place) and pertinent details about their occupation along with at least 3 questions you’d like to ask the speakers.

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 Preparation Assignments are due by 11:59 pm on the day before the class period of the speaker’s visit. Please see our weekly schedule for speaker dates and plan accordingly. These assignments are easy to work on and turn in early since our speakers schedule is already on the syllabus.

Extra Credit Opportunity: We will need a volunteer to send a thank you note to each 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. Each student may volunteer for this opportunity only once.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You are the Event Planner!</th>
<th>Due:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 points</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Update #1: 9/20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Update #2: 10/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final: 11/29</td>
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</table>

Everyone knows someone who is planning an event in their life. Whether it is a birthday party, shower, anniversary, bar/bat mitzvah, quinceanera, wedding, branding event, or other private event, jump in to manage as much as you can. Remember the difference between an event for a specific audience and one that is open to the public. If your event is not technically a private event, you should not plan it for this assignment.

- Find a Private Event that you can take on a considerable amount of responsibilities with the planning and execution that takes place after October 23rd but before December 4th. It must have a private guest list - not something that the general public can attend.
- Meet in person, Facetime/Skype, or have a phone call with your client to learn the goals of their event and how you can help the with the planning. Continue to communicate with them as many times as necessary to make the event a success. Keep track of all the times you communicate with your client and tell us at the end how many emails, how many phone calls, and how many in-person meetings you had with them.
- Write an Event Proposal using our template to share with your client along the planning journey. Share your Event Proposal during each In-Class Presentation.
  - Continue to change and hone the plan as your client makes decisions and progress is made.
  - Your Finalized Event Proposal is graded with your final presentation.
- Written Updates and In-Class Presentations (15 points each)
  - At two points throughout the semester, you will share your progress with the class. Show us your Event Proposals and tell us about your event and progress in
3-5 minute presentations. You will also submit via ICON a 1-2 page written update detailing tasks you recently completed, tasks to do before the next update, and overall feedback about the planning process, and the letter grade you’d give yourself for your efforts in this update period.

- Set up, run, and clean up at your client’s event. (15 points)
  - Be sure to take lots of photos at the event so we can see everything! (students that don’t show images of before, during, and after the event will not receive full credit - you must show your work).
- Prepare a Powerpoint/Slides presentation to show to class:
  - Explain (visually in your presentation) all the steps you took in the planning process and show us how the event turned out using the images you took at the event. (15 points).
  - Final Analysis - Include a slide for your answers to each of these questions: (10 points)
    - What worked really well at the event? What were you very proud of?
    - What didn’t work well? What could have been better?
    - What did you learn by going through this process?
    - If you could have changed anything, what would you have done differently?
  - Turn in the final version of the Event Proposal (30 points)