Foundations of Event Management

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

Instructor: Tracy Hufford

Location: E220 AJB

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

Office Hours: 1:00 to 3:15 p.m. Mondays & 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 discussion post. You are also responsible for sharing any tangibles and updates with our event.

- **BizBash Daily Reports**: Students will monitor BizBash Daily, an e-newsletter from an industry leader, and will present a highlight on 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 team of 3 and arrange to visit an event venue to tour the space and speak with an event planner about the venue and his or her 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:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100% A</td>
<td>88-89% B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94-99% A</td>
<td>84-87% B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93% A-</td>
<td>80-83% B-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**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.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Important Policies and Procedures

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.

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, k.11).

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/ 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 web site 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-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:
Monday, August 21: Course and classmate introductions. Primary assignment explanations and sign up. Class project/clients introduced.

Wednesday, August 23: Client Visit
Discussion: Event Planning Qualifications, Field Overview, and Job Outlook

Week 2:
Wednesday, August 30: Speaker: Sport Event Planning DUE: Event Volunteering signup via ICON discussion board.

Week 3:
Monday, Sept. 4 : Labor Day No Class
Wednesday, Sept. 6: FIELD TRIP: IMU Meet in River Room 1 –Caitlin Stark, Catering IMU

Week 4:
Monday, Sept. 11: Assignment reminder: Venue Visit Discussion: Event timelines, and Budgets
Wednesday, Sept.13: Discussion: Date selection, Venues, and Contracts.

Week 5:

Week 6:
Monday, Sept. 25: Discussion: Client visit
Wednesday, Sept. 27: Speaker: Connie Goldsmith- Décor, Design & Catering

Week 7:
Monday, Oct. 2: Discussion: Technology
Wednesday, Oct. 4: Discussion: Marketing & Social Media.

Week 8:
Monday, Oct. 9: Class visit: Kevin Grothe
Tuesday, Oct. 10: 3:30 p.m.- Location TBD - Event Planning Panel: Sponsorships
Week 9: Monday, Oct. 16: Speaker: Jil Dasher- Corporate Event Planning  
Friday, Oct. 20: Event Planning Cert. Field Trip to Cedar Rapids

Week 10:  
Wednesday, Oct. 25: Event Volunteering Experience presentations.

Week 11:  
Monday, Oct. 30: Guest Speaker: Susan Brennan -Wedding Planning  
Wednesday, Nov. 1: Guest speaker follow up. Discussion: Event Planning in Politics.

Week 12:  
Monday, Nov. 6: Discussion: Crisis Management and Legal/Ethical Elements. Conferences sign up.  
Wednesday, Nov. 8: Guest Speaker: - Sara Maples- Green Events

Week 13:  
Monday, Nov. 13: Individual Conferences.  
Wednesday, Nov. 15: Individual Conferences.

Week of Nov. 20: THANKSGIVING BREAK - Have fun and be safe

Week 14:  
Monday, Nov. 27 Discussion: Measuring Success and Post-Event Steps.  
Assignment reminder: Final Event Plan  
Wednesday, Nov. 29: End of course evaluations. Early birds present final event plans.

Week 15:  
Wednesday, Dec. 6: Final Event Plan presentations.

Week 16:  
Week 17:  
 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.

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. BizBash 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 BizBash 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: Habitat for Humanity

Potential Event Roles:
Client communications
Trello and timeline management
Budget manager
Venue manager/communications/layout/ decor
Catering manager/ Food donations/ Thank you notes
Create play list(s) and event scripts
Marketing manager & media liaison
Create social media posts/drafts
Audience management and guest communications
Event signage & guest experience expert
Activities planner/ Crisis planning and management
Technology expert/Photography
Volunteer Management/Sustainability and waste expert

Day-of-crew – all who are able
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 Wednesday, the assignment is due by class time Monday of that week.

Speaker dates:

Connie Goldsmith- Avacentre- Solon

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

Oct. 9: Kevin Grothe- Vice President of Sponsorships at Memphis in May International Festival

Oct. 16: Jil Dasher, Iowa City HPN Global

Oct. 30: Susan Brennan, Iowa City School Foundation, Iowa City

Nov. 8: Sara Maples, Office of Sustainability
Venue Visit Assignment
Due Sept. 18
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 must sign up for a venue by August 28th on our class google doc, found under our discussion 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 the types of events the venue hosts, examples of annual or typical events, examples of outliers or unusual events, how events are planned at the venue, and details entities planning events there need to know.

Ask for copies of contracts, checklists, 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. 18 and 20.
Event Volunteering Experience  
Due Oct. 23  
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 Aug. 30 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 and at least 3 hours carrying out the event.

**Step 4:** As you are completing your volunteering duties, take notes on how the event is organized. 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, vendors, décor, marketing, technology, activities, etc.? How are guests responding to the event? 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 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. 23 and 25.
Final Event Plan
Due Dec. 4
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. 4 and 6.

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 should not be currently affiliated with the client—no planning something for an organization or business where you already have insider knowledge and access.
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 or Powerpoint/Prezi 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 (PINTEREST)
   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?

Major:

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

Hometown:

Hobbies:

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