



University of California, Merced

Event Planning Strategic Questions

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- What are the key goals and objectives of this event?
- What is the desired outcome and what do you want your guests to take away from this experience?
- Is an event the most appropriate way to achieve your goals (versus, for example, other targeted communication)?
- What is the long-term value of the activity to the university?
- How will you gauge the effectiveness of your event? (client/audience survey, statistical data)

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

- What is your event's primary message and theme?
 - If you will have speakers, who would be appropriate (administrator, faculty, student, alumnus, etc.)?
 - If there are multiple speakers, how will their messages be appropriately differentiated and integrated?
 - How will this program be “choreographed”?
 - What other elements may be incorporated to convey the message (i.e. video, music, visuals)
- What are the ways this event will be marketed?
 - How can we gain greater effectiveness/leverage from this event – before and after?
 - Have you considered contacting Public Relations to explore marketing options?
 - How will your message be communicated or reinforced?
 - Print materials (save the date, invite, flyers)
 - Event Calendar, Happenings
 - Web and/or Social Media
 - Advertising (radio, campus digital signage)
 - Media story
 - Listserv
 - Local/national media
- Do the promotional materials (design and copy) clearly reflect/identify UC Merced?
 - Are they compliant with the UC Merced Brand Standard?

PLANNING & PRODUCTION

- What department is paying for the event and what is the budgeted amount?
- Who is the target audience?
 - What mechanism/groups/ mailing list will you use to reach them?
 - Who else might benefit from this event beyond the primary attendees? If appropriate and monetarily feasible, consider alumni, donors, community members, legislators, media, students, faculty and staff. Coordinate with the appropriate colleagues who have responsibility for those audiences.
- Are there opportunities to partner/collaborate with other campus units or off-campus entities?
- If you anticipate a role for the Chancellor or Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor, consult with your dean, vice chancellor or AVC about what their role would be and the implications of including or not including them.
- What is the best date and location for this event?
 - Time of year (academic calendar vs. summer)
 - Location (size, type/style of venue, parking)
 - Will the time or location of this event be affected by other events happening at/around the same time?