Be Our Guest: Put Our Students to the Test

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Soft Skills

- Communication
- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Teamwork
- Professionalism
- Experiences
- Leadership

- Desired by employers
- Can be difficult to teach
- Service learning helps
- All skills are utilized when planning an event
- Event planning experiences requested by alumni
ACOM 2200-Professional Development

- Event planning
- Cover letters, resumes, interviews
- Communications portfolio
- Professional dress
- Business etiquette
Event Planning

- Plan and execute an event during the semester:
  - Create a theme
  - Establish a timeline
  - Book a venue
  - Book catering (if needed)
  - Advertising and invitations
  - Designate and stick to a budget
  - Manage registration
  - Decorate (if necessary)
Previous Events:

Professional development workshops
Student showcase
Agricultural issues forums
Alumni reunion
End of year functions

Photography workshop, Fall 2014
Measures of learning

- Rubric of participation
- Timeliness, organization, communication, attitude, teamwork, work ethic, professionalism
- Partner evaluation
- Post event notebook and reflection
Results by the numbers

- Ag Issues Forum
  - 90-150 attendees

- Alumni reunion
  - 75 alumni

- Workshops
  - 8-15 per event

- End of year student functions
  - 45-100 attended
Student comments

- “Planning and executing this event will be very beneficial to all of our futures because of the obstacles we encountered.”

- “If we are ever put in charge of a work event, we will be adequately prepared with the skills and knowledge to create a cost-effective event.”

- “Our largest success was overcoming the struggles of working as a team to make the workshop a success.”
Funding

- Donations
- Registration fees
- Student organizations
- Federal grants
- Alumni association
- Department resources
## Successes and Pitfalls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Successes</th>
<th>Pitfalls</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great strides in maturity, communication, leadership, organizational skills, teamwork, and critical thinking observed</td>
<td>This is a high maintenance class</td>
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<td>Wonderful service to alumni, supporters and community</td>
<td>Can be difficult to balance the perfect amount of members per group</td>
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<td>Resume builder for students</td>
<td>Juggling three to four events per semester is stressful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Great PR for the department</td>
<td>It’s hard to let the students make mistakes</td>
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<td>Other groups are requesting our students plan events</td>
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Advice to others

- Get a good teaching assistant
- Start the unit in the first or second week of classes
- Be very clear with expectations
  - (Handout)
- Let them make mistakes
- Try to keep enrollment less than 30
- Need department support
- Communicate events will all in the department
- Try to combine events
- Have fun with it!
Questions